" Where there is no vision the people perish."

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SERVICE IS POWER

SING, first-born follower of the god of Day,
Whom on the bare and windy Delian rock,
Girt with the Cyclades for worshippers,
The long-robed sons of Ion hymned with praise,
With double flute, Pan's pipe and seven-stringed lyre,
Sing, Clio, of the slow ascent of Man,
The victories of the mind and not the sword,
The victories of Love with bleeding hands,
Pierced feet, and on His head a crown of thorns,
And Hope, blind-folded, throned upon the world,
See-er of visions, chanting to the stars
Echoes of marvellous strains the Pleiades,
Orion's quarry, and the Hosts of Heaven
Send down to earth from their remote retreat
Amid the vast halls of the Galaxy,
The clear cold altitudes of utmost space.
Sing Hope, sing Love, and from their union,
Their mystic marriage, all Man's better deeds,
All of his deeds that last not but a day!
From what long-distant, long-forgotten time,
What stirring of the world's first element
Or breath of God upon the water's face,
Man sprang, to fitly sing aspire not thou,
Nor the hard climb from that fantastic blur
Of shapeless nights and mornings, when the sun
Loomed through the mist a circle of dull fire,
And long-necked, bony-eyed sea-monsters strove
In merciless debate, while brontosaur
Crashed through the tangled mesozoic forest
Swaying his unwieldy bulk in headlong flight
Before tyrannosaurus' blood-shot eye
And cruel snapping jaws, till in dull pain,
After uncounted æons of slow time,
Wild Nature felt her hot heart growing cold,
Colder and colder in the icy grip
Of glaciers grinding surely from the north
O'er all the ardent and the lazy south.
These things to sing aspire not, but do thou
Tune thy stringed lyre to hymn the consummation

Which dawned upon the world that day of days,
When the ungainly, shaggy, brutal sire
Of all earth's since uncounted generations,
Crowning his forebear's dumb unchanted toil—
Slowly, ever slowly, straightening back
And lifting head—at last from some drear cave
Stepped forth erect, looked out with level eyes,
And stood with right hand skilled to fend for food,
To hew, to build, responsive to the brain—
A sluggard brain as yet but God-foredestined
One day to speed a Plato's arrowy thought—
As yet uncomprehending, whilst broad earth
Thrilled through her still unlovely length and breadth,
Knowing already the master of the world!
O Muse, what reflex of divinity,
What deathless spark, was kindled in that brain,
Whereby from the uncouth, half-animal
Ranger of bleak moraines has come the godlike,
Lofty, aloof, soul of the pioneer,
The dreaming bard who shrines in living words
The beauty flowing from the lips of song,
Or he who weaves into a symphony
The rhythmic heart-beat of the universe,
Or patient on his watch-tower measures up
The glittering plurality of worlds,
The lofty, aloof soul of the pioneer
Championing hopeless causes, yielding life
And hope and joy for those that sit in shade,
Working alone, thinking alone, inventing
Marvellous combinations of elements,
Harnessing light and sound and heat, subduing
Nature's varied springs of rebellion,
Spanning with mighty mind the ocean's girth
And earth and air with creatures of his will?
What secret beyond mere intelligence
Lies underneath this long descent of ours,
This roll of rising and of falling states,
Each of which like a stately galleon
Puts out from shore upon an unknown course,

And while the haven's scarcely out of sight,
The perils of the deep not yet attempted,
And all is halcyon weather, in its hour,
Careless of danger, rising to the height,
The pinnacle, of Fame's uncertain sea,
Deems the triumphant sweep of silver foam
Must shortly bear it safely home to port,
And confident holds wassail, while its crew
Sleeps drunken at its post, nor heeds the squall
Till at the peak 'tis smitten by the wind,
Rolled over with its music and its pomp,
Its fluttering streamers and its silken sails
And all its company of young and fair,
Into the huge deeps of the water-world,
And they within it wake with startled eyes
Half-drowned in foam, half-deaf with falling waters,
To find themselves not conquerors of the main,
But waifs upon a wind-tossed cockle-shell
Cast rudderless upon a stormy waste,
Racing along towards a grey horizon,
Bereft of sight or hope of any land!
And if some few escape the shattered wreck,
'Tis but to be picked up to serve another
As confident, as buoyant, and as gay,
Which sails the seas as careless as the last,
And dreams at length of triumph till it too,
Grown just as wanton, meets as just a doom,
And in its turn contributes of its store
To make another's growth. And yet, and yet,
Each ship that's launched on these uncharted seas,
Is stronger, better, lovelier than the last,
Sets forth with nobler music, lordlier banners,
Loftier poop, and ampler, mightier sails,
Till comes a time when each lone voyager
Draws near to each, and in one company,
Linked by a common bond, they sally forth
A gallant argosy, no more foredoomed
To sure destruction but aglow with hope
Somehow to land on that illusive coast,

Those summer islands of perpetual rest,
Glimpsèd in dreams, sung of in legends old,
The long-desired, scarce hoped-for realms of peace,
The golden close of the Hesperides,
That vision of the loveliest and best
In every age, the Citadel of God !
What secret beyond mere intelligence
Lies underneath our long descent but this :
That there is in us some divine ascent,
Some yearning up to that which we call God,
The which is Love, as he of Tarsus wrote,
Following a mightier, loftier, lovelier One,
As preached the high son of Suddhôdana
In fabulous Ind beneath the Bôdhi tree
Whilst all creation bowed to hear his voice,
Preaching how we, earth-bound, can only gain
True liberty through self-forgetfulness,
Which, seeing Love can cast out fear, is Love ?
And Love itself, what is the cause thereof ?
From what deep-planted instinct welleth up
That fount of Paradisal sympathy,
Which breaks all barriers that lie between
Till stream with stream meets and is intermixed,
And flows on in majestic unison
To harpings heard not of unopened ears,
And even in life beats at the gates of Heaven ?
What is it but the deathless element
Pent for a while in heavy imprisoning clay,
Which in the passing of the summer wind,
The hum of bees in clover-laden fields,
The music of the clouds across the sky,
Silver on fathomless blue, in stately passage,
Feels memory stir, and in the bright-flung foam,
The noise of waters, the all-conquering sun's
Radiant compulsion tingeing with myriad hues
The delicate petals of multitudinous flowers,
Some with but colour's shadow, some with flaunting
Riot of dyes, drawing from Mother Earth
With powerful resistless tall stem and broad leaf,

Nature's profuse obeisance unto God,
Her unashamed pæan of thankfulness,
Recaptures stray notes of that song celestial,
That field immense of Godward adoration,
Whence in its happier pre-natal age,
Ere despatched here to suffer and to die—
Through pain to fit itself to mate with God—
It visited the pale courts of the moon,
Swung on her horn-tips o'er the ocean's brim,
Sang greeting to the planets in their course,
Or watched the sunrise touch with burnished gold
The marvellous plumes of the angelic host
Chanting with loud hosannas round the Throne?
What is it but this primal element
Recapturing memories of the happier past,
Beholding visions of the holier future,
And even as a flower towards the sun
Turns of its nature, by a dear compulsion
Grows a pure spirit, soaring up in hope,
Blind though as yet, to find what it has lost
Yet lovelier for the waiting and the pain,
To meet again and mix with the Infinite,
Become itself beauty imperishable,
Pure ether of pure loveliness, unstained,
Reborn, re-bathed in godlike innocence,
Pure peace, pure joy, like to the morning stars
Who in earth's dawn made Heaven resound with song?
We are but echoes of a mightier will;
A Spirit moves in us which through all time
Alone has ruled the worlds; that Spirit drives
Our better selves with an immortal urge
Ever towards perfection; one with it,
We are at peace; rebel against it, we
Are as a house divided against itself,
Blind pigmies groping in a derelict room
At fall of night, gusty, without a moon,
In some half crazy tenement whose cracked
Rain-besmudged windows gaze upon a blank
Shadow-enveloped landscape cleft by roads

No pick has tended for a hundred years,
Scarce visible in the darkness, full of ruts
To snare the feet, irregularities
To spatter us with filthy, stagnant mud,
Purposeless roads that lead us either way
To salt sea-marsh and slimy, brackish pools.
So our souls' windows gaze with an unillumed
Idiot stare, proof of a vacant mind,
And we within scared by each blast of wind,
Each uncouth shadow and each creaking board,
Stumble in craven fear at every step.
Evil intents, unwholesome, sinister,
Lurk in each nook and whisper in our ears
Abominable thoughts. So we shut out
Ourselves from Eden, build a barrier
Against the wooings of the sweet West Wind,
Against the mild beams of the Hesper Star,
And all the soothings of the summer night.
From such rebellions come the greed of life,
The cruelties, the folly, and the sin,
All things which smirch the Commonweal's fair face,
Check our attainment of the ultimate good,
Tangle the delicate threads of corporate life,
Derange the workings of our joint machine,
Betray the promise of the good to be,
Give life the black similitude of Hell.
We are too fearful to entrust ourselves
To that surpassing dream all eyes have seen
Sometime in life, that vision of the Blest,
That foretaste of unearthly happiness
No soul on earth so hardened but hath known,
That consciousness half realized that God
Alone is real, alone omnipotent,
Omniscient, alone is omnipresent.
And if the heart-beat of the universe,
The which is God, is also naught but Love,
Of which and in which all men have their being,
No act of ours that tends not up to God
Partakes of His own sempiternal essence,

Partakes of deathlessness. We do but build
The fair house of the future when from us
We let Love's lyric utterance take his flight,
Bearing upon his pinions healing dews
And in his hand his holy torch to kindle
The burnt-out love within another's heart.
Love thrives on liberty. Meet love with love
And life grows taller, statelier, till his head
Reaches high Heaven and wreathes itself in stars.
Meet love with love and life in each of us
Becomes a richer thing, an ampler tune,
Grows more towards the sun. Meet love with hate
And light goes and the god in us is dwarfed.
Meet hate with hate and all's confusion.
This, Clio, on that endless roll of thine
Hast thou with heart-break and averted eyes
Pricked down in words of fire in hope that we,
Reading of all the blood-stained pomps of war,
The worm that feeds on power that boasts itself,
Decay that follows after luxury
With sure avenging feet, may turn at last
From childish follies and with eager hope
May burn our boats and turn again to Love.
For through thy story like a vein of gold
Run these two deathless impulses of Man,
The need to love, the yearning to aspire
Somehow, somewhen, to come again to God,
Runs too the warning of the consequence
Which falls irrevocable on who shuts out
From others or himself this hope, this love.
Against these two the red law of the sword
Has warred since time began.

In Nineveh
Men built them palaces of sun-burnt brick
Bright with enamels, rich with cedarn doors
Covered with beaten bronze in low relief
Depicting all their triumphs, cedarn shafts
Encased in plates of silver or of gold
Or diapered with lapis lazuli,

Mother-o'-pearl, sandstone or yellow shell,
And ivory were the thrones on which they sat.
O mighty were the feasts of Nineveh,
Mighty the revels of the king of kings,
Sumptuous the jewelled beauty of her women,
Her dissolute, idle women ; all her men
Walked with the crown of lordship on their heads,
Walked with the conqueror's step, and deemed that she,
The sovereign city, would outlast the world.
But blood was on the hands of Nineveh,
Blood on her polished pavements, blood between
The rows on rows of bricks within her walls,
Blood of the conquered earth that cried aloud
For vengeance on imperial Nineveh
And all her centuries of dominion.
The agonies of prisoners flayed alive,
Impaled alive before her gates and towers,
The heart-break of the exile, woke again
To hover o'er the head of Nineveh.
Earth rose against her lordship, cast her forth
Into the darkness of destruction,
Till where had been the haunts of luxury,
The insolence of pride, the sun looked down
On shapeless ruins which the beating rain
Washed back into the clay from which they came,
Choking the regal chambers in their fall,
Hiding the carven triumphs, royal hunts
Of lion or wild ass, the crowned winged bulls
Impotent now to ward disaster off,
Making of all that pomp of majesty
To front the light of day but grass-grown hills
Carpeted with the beauty of spring flowers.
So has it been with all like Nineveh,
With Egypt and with Babylon, with Tyre,
Hellas and Carthage and all-shadowing Rome,
The empire of the Cæsars or the Popes,
The house of pride built up at Agincourt,
The towering magnitude of Philip's Spain.
Greatness built up on force may last awhile

But sure is its sunsetting. Men yet read
The clay-impressed records of Babylon,
Though broken be her sword—all that her mind,
All that her heart has given of good and true,
Her poems and her laws—and but of them
Keep what subserve the purposes of God,
Tend upward to the light, and still men read
The wonder-tales of Egypt's wise old night.
Still through the darkness of departed days
Glimmers some part of the unforgotten glow
That shone so beautiful o'er Grecian seas
When Homer's sun first rose upon the world,
Or later rose Sappho's inimitable
Radiant song clear as the orbèd moon's
Full silver rondure on a night of stars.
Still men discourse of friendship and old age
With Cicero or catch the honey dropped
In each choice phrase from Maro's golden tongue.
A thousand singers since have lived and died,
Some glorious beacons in the heaven of heavens
To light us on, sublime, unquenchable,
Some lesser lamps to cast upon our path
A humbler gleam yet all the kindlier,
Sufficient for our comfort day by day.
A thousand hearts have breathed into cold stone
Life's essence and immortalized our dreams,
Our noblest aspirations, or awaked
With sure deft brush-marks colour's glowing soul.
As many patient architects have built
Fair temples dedicate to Beauty's name,
And set aloft for ever in our midst
Memorials of our higher, happier, selves,
The just proportion and the harmony,
The equal balance, it is ours to gain.
Men have devoted many a weary year
To erudition, widening our store
Of heaped up knowledge, probing for us means
To greater mastery of all things that are,
Fitting us for the dangers yet to be,

Teaching us wisdom and the self-denial
That must be ours upon our pilgrimage
Through Love to reach the Dayspring from on High.
O for the myriads who have dared the deep
Questing in all the lone wastes of the world,
Far from a welcoming hand or friendly face,
To lay the whole earth's treasures at our feet,
And breathed their last without a thought or song
To comfort them in their supremest hour,
Or in the bowels of the treacherous mine
Have groped for us and hewn for us and died
The death of suffocation that we might live
Warm in the smooth routine of happy lives,
Or by the sick-bed watched with tender care,
Braved death from many a dread and foul disease,
That others might have rest from suffering.
O poet's voice, O painter's eager soul,
O giant struggle of the sculptor's heart,
O patient architect who rear'st on high
Temples to harmony, O pioneer
In earth's dark secrets, O grammarian
Who tun'st our ears to speech's matchless grace,
O merchant, O explorer, O all ye,
Or great or humble, who have spent yourselves
That grief might lessen, that the narrow track
Which leads from that far, tangled, primal forest
Traversed by the low-browed, half-simian
Forefather of us all, might some day be
A shining high-road to the gates of Heaven
Trod by a thronging host of singing men,
Clear-eyed, strong-sinewed, happy, unafraid,
And gracious women, taller, lovelier,
Of a more glorious presence than of old
Poet or painter dreamed of, hand in hand
With little children whose undaunted eyes
No fear shall e'er o'ershadow, flinging up
Their silver laughter with the song of birds,
Whilst all around them fields Elysian
Lie mile on mile wet with ethereal dews,

What is the ceaseless burden of your message,
What the unfailing key you offer us
But this word of the teacher, " God is Love."
But this word of the Master, " Lo, I give
A fresh commandment to you which shall close
The ancient covenant and ope the new :
' Love ye your neighbours even as yourselves,"
Which, if translated into common life,
Our little effort of each passing day,
Bears one unchanging high significance :
Civilization is to learn to serve !

ERIC B. W. CHAPPELOW

A SONG IN THE POETS' AGE

WHEN you have grown tired of princesses,
And queens who were loved of the sun,
When the gleam of their fairy-tale dresses
Fades out, and the ballad is done,
And another is never begun ;

When proud ladies of legend and story
Who were strangely fantastic and cold,
Grow pale in their moonshine of glory,
And sleep, and white hands that they fold
Lure no longer their singer of old ;

And when I have forgotten my yearning
For heralded knights riding by ;
When the fierce, leaping flames of Troy burning
Are dreams in an alien sky,
And I weep not, though Paris must die ;

And I thrill to no monarch who passes,
But troubadours, lovers, and kings
Are as shadows that move on the grasses,
Or spirits of wandering things—
Late notes that a twilight bird sings ;

O then we'll remember for ever
Our singing, our grief and our gain!
How we stormed the great gates of endeavour,
And laughed in the wind and the rain,
And made music the master of pain!

But at length we must turn from the splendour—
The limitless dreams of the mind—
And even their lonely defender,
Brave Song—and the years that were kind;
For the best is in front and to find!

Let us make our love safe from all danger
Ere time strikes a blow at our pride;
Let us cradle Love low in a manger,
And worship and watch at His side;
No love that is spirit has died!

O Singer, return from far Faery,
For I must come home from the Kings!
See now, how the years have grown weary,
For a Child, and no other, Heaven sings,
And the angels have folded their wings.

VERA I. ARLETT.

MIDSUMMER STORM

BRAMBLE and briar and crab-apple leaves
Are strings where the rain its cadence weaves
And breaking covert in midsummer air
The lightning's spear has roused the Bear

And the stars whirl past in a hunted crowd
Through a broken gap in a ragged cloud,
But the storm that growls where the river goes
Sweetens the grass, matures the rose.

And we who watch from a clay-pit's face
Torrential rain and the storm's mad race
New born, hear hedges laugh and sing
And breathe dust-fragrance, marvelling.

A. D L. WILSON.

ENGLISH MYSTICAL POETRY

THE word " mysticism " has for many years been dragged through the defiling atmosphere of journalistic sensation-mongering and drawing-room chatter: everyone uses it for any experience inexplicable to common sense. Now mysticism is a temper and an outlook rather than a definite system of thought. To the professional philosopher or theologian the mystic, prose writer or poet, bears much the same relation as the artist to the dealer in oil-paints and canvas, or the sculptor to the stone-mason. All real mystics—and there are very few in any age—belong to the same country and speak ultimately the same language, from Plato in his poetic myth in the *Phædrus* telling of the souls of men riding after the gods round the dome of Heaven down to Francis Thompson, who merely inverts the metaphor and tells of the Heavenly Hunter pursuing the human soul down the nights and down the days. As experience, therefore, mysticism should appeal specially to those who decline to be imprisoned in dogmatic fetters : it is original in the sense that it *does* go back to origins and does not merely theorize about them. When it speaks its truest language, mysticism speaks musically : the two terms are essentially and etymologically related. Mystical utterance is the tuneful voice of purified emotion, after a spiritual manner : Richard Rolle called it the *canor* (melody). Other speech, issuing from mind rather than from soul, is relatively rhetorical, and though mind and reason must needs be employed to ensure intelligibility, yet the value of the expression is proportional to its freedom from the warping influence of intellectual prejudice. The mind is an imperfect instrument because it often unconsciously deflects and colours the message. Silence is often the best speech, but since humanity is impelled to give expression even to silence and Him whom only silence can express, it remains that the purest vocal utterances come *ex ore infantium*—from the mouth of babes, who whatever their mortal age may be are young and fresh in spirit :—

> Thou Primal Love, that grantest wings
> And voices unto woodland birds,

Grant me the gift of saying things
Too simple and too sweet for words.[1]

Here is the naïve voice of aboriginal, unsophisticated man, but recently exparadised, striving to sing his Lord's own song in a strange land, yet hampered by an inadequate organ of expression, and lovingly envious in this respect of orders of life less noble than his own. The logical reason speaks prosaically and at best with stammering tongue : the native voice of the soul, like that of the world-soul, is eternally rhythmic, and the truest poetry is that of the truest mystic.

Poetry is the quest of Beauty and Truth—the Body and Soul of Reality—contained in any given subject-matter. But what are they ? In themselves they are unanalysable, like Kant's *Ding an sich*—" Thing-in-itself " : not one, but an aggregate of pleasing qualities ; perfections focussed a confluence and synthesis of virtues. Plato, anticipating by four centuries the words of the Gospels, affirmed that the absolute Ideal Beauty, of which all gleams of earthly beauty are but iridescent reflexes, exists objectively upon a transcendental plane of life, " shining in company with the celestial forms," and that anyone initiated into direct cognition of it will leave all, father, mother, and companions and despise all loss to follow It, or, as the Hebrew prophet would say " see the King in His beauty," in a land very far off, i.e., not of this world. Edmund Spenser, following Plato, sang his hymns to Intellectual and Heavenly Beauty, and of course it is the hidden theme of that truest of nursery-tales about the Sleeping Beauty ever waiting in a tangled forest for the reviving kiss of the lover bold enough to win through. But this again is only a variant of other cosmic parables telling Freemasons and others of a Lost Word to be found or of a ruined Temple to be rebuilt ; telling of a Sangrail hidden behind conventional sacramental worship : telling of kings and ideal heroes sore wounded and departed towards the sunset : all legends of man's Fall and Loss : parables of his present dream-life amid illusions, until the awakening kiss comes and restores him or sets him on the path to his primal inheritance.

[1] *Angel in the House.*—Patmore.

Now, despite all appearances to the contrary, the British race has an ineradicable tendency towards mystical expression—more especially in verse. Whatever fairy godmother presided at the birth of our race-soul endowed it with this gift—possibly as a compensation for the lack of that purely philosophical and speculative leaning which we find especially among the countrymen of Bergson and Hegel. On the whole, in spite of the great Bishop Berkeley, the British mind is non-speculative. It can produce a Shakespeare, a Chaucer, and a William Blake; but scarcely a Plotinus or an Aristotle. Poetry, however, offers another channel for the old problem of reconciling the Many and the One and for the shadowing forth, by symbol and parable of the light that never was on sea or land. Mystical ideas really underlie the thought of many of our greatest poets, if we except, say, Chaucer, Dryden, Milton, and Byron; especially do they colour certain passages of Shakespeare such as Prospero's great speech at the close of *The Tempest*; but the dramatic form does not lend itself to any sustained effort of this kind. Milton's puritan theology was wholly antipathetic to the real mystical spirit; yet one cannot deny that the writer of *Lycidas* could have produced work not unworthy of Crashaw or Traherne, had his politics and temperament allowed him.

It is worth noting that in the early Anglo-Saxon writers, though they give us a few very beautiful narrative and devotional poems, like the *Dream of the Rood*, the special mystical note was wanting. It was apparently necessary for Norman-French culture to soak thoroughly into the English spirit before Richard Rolle could begin to sing in his native language or the unknown writer of that beautiful fifteenth-century ballad *Quia Amore Langueo*. After the Renaissance and about the middle of the sixteenth century, the mystical stream begins to flow strongly with Robert Southwell, John Donne, Quarles, and George Herbert: and the seventeenth century may be called the golden age of English mystical poetry. If it be asked why in the Middle Ages the Faith produced so little definitely mystical verse, the answer is that religious verse almost invariably

took the set form of hymns to the Trinity and the Blessed Virgin, and whatever mystical feeling was latent was inextricably blended with a conventionally dogmatic framework. As far as prose writing goes such mediaeval writers as the author of the *Cloud of Unknowing* and Lady Julian of Norwich and others have not been surpassed by any modern prose mystic. But the poets of those days scarcely conceived the idea of contacting Deity or Reality primarily through Nature, Beauty, or Love ; any more than the great painters selected other than scriptural and devotional subjects as the medium of their art. The Reformation and Renaissance, whatever their merits or demerits in other directions, certainly opened out new channels and vehicles of self-expression. The Godward trend of the poetic mind, hitherto conventionally limited to one mode, now expanded through others as well. Very few people are aware that George Herbert was practically the first man to write an English hymn, as compared with the old Church hymns which were all in Latin : and everyone knows how bare and impoverished would be English religion of to-day without its hymns. It is a true, even if simple and crude, instinct in the average Englishman who rarely goes to church, that when he comes to die, he unconsciously likes to attune himself to the rhythm of eternity awaiting him, by saying or singing a verse from a favourite hymn. Indeed the hymn, almost more than any official Church, might be regarded religiously as his spiritual mother and onlie-begetter. He may often be, as a foreign critic has remarked, " Christian by profession, materialistic in practice, and agnostic in creed," but—even " without benefit of clergy "—he often makes his swan song a hymn.

Amongst those who first celebrated the nuptials of poetry and sanctity in English song were John Donne (that earlier and also somewhat gloomy) Dean of S. Paul's, Henry Vaughan the " Silurist," Thomas Traherne—and such mystics of the natural rather than the sacramental order as Andrew Marvell and Richard Lovelace. Vaughan and Traherne actually lived to the verge of the eighteenth, but

in spirit belong entirely to the seventeenth, century. This century which saw the world of Whitehall and Versailles flown with insolence and wine, saw it denied and renounced by poet-lovers of God. They hid themselves and little note was taken of them, while Restoration dramatists of a somewhat licentious order held the stage. That moral example to all politically minded parsons, George Herbert, gave up the Court and dreams of a diplomatic career for the greater, though at first lowlier, fame of writing love-lyrics from the soul to God, such as *The Elixir* :

> All may of Thee partake
> Nothing can be so mean
> Which with his tincture " for Thy sake,"
> Will not grow bright and clean.
> A servant with this clause
> Makes drudgerie divine ;
> Who sweeps a room as for Thy laws
> Makes that and the action fine.
> This is the famous Stone
> That turneth all to gold ;
> For that which God doth touch and own
> Cannot for lesse be told.

When dying, Herbert handed the MS. of *The Temple* to his friend with the humble request that if this picture of many spiritual conflicts might be found of advantage to any dejected poor souls, it might be published, and if not, burnt, for the author and his work were less than the least of God's mercies : and such a request is itself perhaps as wonderful as anything he wrote. Vaughan, again, hid himself so well that some of the best anthology collectors have been hardly aware of him, while the writings of Traherne were only brought to light accidentally some thirty years ago by Mr. Dobell. Practically all the poems of Traherne and Crashaw are mystical. Crashaw, the son of ultra-Protestant parents, joined the Roman Church as a result of his study of the Spanish mystics, especially the admirable S. Teresa whose pathetic attempt at the age of seven to gain martyrdom at the hands of the Moors won his homage : he closes his Hymn to her as follows :—

O thou undaunted daughter of desires!
By all thy dower of lights and fires
By all the eagle in thee, all the dove,
By all thy lives and deaths of love;
By thy large draughts of intellectual day,
And by thy thirsts of love, more large than they;
By the full kingdom of that final kiss
That seized thy parting soul, and sealed thee His:
By all the heavens thou hast in Him
(Fair sister of the Seraphim)
By all of him we have in thee;
Leave nothing of my self in me.
Let me so read thy life, that I
Unto all life of mine may die.

It is curious to notice that the symbols of Blood and Fire attracted this English Romanist mystic as strongly as they do modern Salvationists. This hymn haunted S. T. Coleridge and was the stimulus prompting *Christabel*. All Crashaw's writings are one long sustained cry for God in lyric after lyric of flaming passion. He has no other theme, no other thought. Along with his Anglican compeer, Herbert, he may claim to be the father of English devotional poetry. Traherne, of a less fiery nature, is more meditative and Platonic in his musings. The Vision Splendid came to him in early childhood and only with difficulty did his elders persuade him of the value of common gold. He lived on ten pounds a year, was nourished by bread and water, wore a leather suit, like Fox, and could say simply and sincerely: "I live a free and kingly life, as if the world were turned again to Eden, or much more, as it is this day." One can only add: "Of such is the Kingdom of God."

But everywhere the mystical spirit overflowed from religious musings into the love and nature poems of that luminous period; so that even when Campion and Carew are penning stanzas to inconstant mistresses one feels the latent sublimation of the senses, especially that of sight. A nectarine or curious peach sends Andrew Marvell into a sort of garden ecstasy:

Casting the body's vest aside
My soul into the boughs doth glide.

There like a bird it sits and sings
Then whets and claps its silver wings,
And, till prepared for longer flight,
Waves in its plumes the various light.

At the end of this golden age, all mystery and mysticism seem to fly from English poetry and prose alike. Between the last cadences of Vaughan and the first flights of Wordsworth, the only star shining in the dreary firmament of rationalism was the eccentric William Blake, a militant mystic from his cradle to his death-bed; who at the age of four declared he saw God looking through the window, and was indiscreet enough to mention the fact to his parents who thereupon soundly thrashed him—a most instructive episode as regards the unconscious attitude of the great and respectable British Public to its Creator. Blake's life was one long intoxication of vision: "sensible" people thought him a lunatic; in Platonic parlance he was touched with "divine mania," and had he known it would have willingly termed himself along with St. Francis, as "God's silly fool." Nature, to Blake, was the result of a contraction of consciousness: we have fallen from the unity of the eternal imaginative creativity into separation and the worship of reason. By imagination he meant art, intuition, instinct, and all qualities opposed to hard logic, self-centredness and attachment to the concrete, which he symbolized in the phrase "Newton's sleep." Once delivered from this tyrannical illusion (and how he would have rejoiced to see the day of Einstein and the fall of scientific materialism!), we can open immortal eyes on eternity ever expanding into what Ruysbrock called *Vastissimum Divinitatis pelagus* (the infinite sea of Deity). Again and again Blake expounds the nature and operation of his beloved faculty of in-seeing or vision:

What to others a trifle appears
Fills me full of smiles and tears
For double the vision my eyes do see
And a double vision is always with me:
With my inward eye 'tis an old man grey,
With my outward, a thistle across my way.

He expresses the whole mystery of faith in two simple lines that seem written for the nursery—and doubtless they are used in the infant schools of heaven :

> If the sun and moon should doubt
> They'd immediately go out.

He is entirely, though unconsciously, Franciscan, in his love of the humbler ranks of creation.

> A Robin Redbreast in a cage
> Puts all Heaven in a rage
> A skylark wounded on the wing
> Doth make a cherub cease to sing.

Although scarcely an orthodox Christian he finds the secret of the universe much as Christ found it in the lilies of Galilee :

> To see the world in a grain of sand,
> And a heaven in a wild flower ;
> Hold infinity in the palm of your hand
> And eternity in an hour.

Like Mozart and many another of God's first-born children the greatest of our painter-poets was buried like a pauper, and until recently no memorial marked his for gotten grave in Bunhill Fields. Of the Hebrew visionary also it is written " that no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day." Perhaps it is just as well, for the mystics would far rather we understood their message than that municipal authorities garnished their sepulchres.

Wordsworth, who comes next in this apostolic succession, is the Nature mystic *par excellence*. Love, Beauty, Religion and Wisdom make little appeal to him, apart from Nature. His spiritual forbear was Vaughan, a confirmed Platonist, who spent his time comparing natural and spiritual processes, and for whom the change of silkworm to butterfly, the shooting waters of the Usk and the periodicities of nature all confirmed his preconceived theories. But while Vaughan subjected feeling to thought, for Wordsworth all his thoughts were steeped in feeling. He received his call amid the vocal solitudes of virginal nature —the lake-scenery declared the glory of God to this

Psalmist—and was caught up, like S. Paul, out of the sense-world to a recollection of the superb glory of "that imperial palace whence he came." He discerned, also, that that glory was nowise banished even here, but merely shrouded; ever ready to "flash upon the inward eye" of those who can find something *more* in "a primrose by the river's brim" than a mere specimen of the genus *Primulaceæ acaulis*, or an opportunity of turning the supposed floral taste of a deceased Hebrew statesman to their political advantage. Wordsworth seems to teach that most of us are in the same attitude in the presence of Nature as an illiterate peasant might be on hearing Immanuel Kant lecture on the "Critique of Pure Reason." To such an one it would be a succession of meaningless phrases. He might understand each word separately, but the essential idea of such a discourse would remain a complete enigma until he was properly trained. Quite unconsciously Wordsworth suggests, especially in his two longer poems, the same necessity for the purgative process as the mediaeval mystics, when he speaks of bending to *other* uses some of the primitive, healthy animal feelings and instincts that surge up in most normal people. His own reward was the full enjoyment in a peculiar degree, of this "sensing of infinity," and a rare gift of rewarding his patient readers with passages that flash like jewels amid a good deal of arid and tedious blank verse. Leaving aside the more hackneyed lines of his great *Ode*, let us note the exquisite Nature-teaching and Platonism of the following passage:

> But for those first affections,
> Those shadowy recollections,
> Which, be they what they may,
> Are yet the fountain light of all our day
> Are yet a master-light of all our seeing;
> Uphold us, cherish, and have power to make
> Our noisy years seem moments in the being
> Of the eternal Silence: truths that wake
> To perish never:
> Which neither listlessness, nor mad endeavour,
> Nor Man nor Boy,
> Nor all that is at enmity with joy,
> Can utterly abolish or destroy!

Hence in a season of calm weather
Though inland far we be,
Our Souls have sight of that immortal Sea.
Which brought us hither,
Can in a moment travel thither
And see the children sport upon the shore,
And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore.

Turning to another of the four great Platonic paths of divine mania, for some the appeal of the ideal Beauty beckoned through the face of woman. Of these, Dante Rossetti's mysticism appears rather from his pictures than from his poems. He was fascinated by beauty and by a thirst for the knowledge of the mystery hiding behind it: to him it is a symbol of something far greater and higher than itself. If he may be justly convicted of a certain ultra-sensuousness he at least was seeking the God of Art in a world of Victorian ugliness. Coventry Patmore, with less poetic faculty and power of appeal, nevertheless takes his readers nearer the secret heart of Womanhood:

Her beauty was a godly grace;
The mystery of loveliness
Which made an altar of her face,
Was not of the flesh, though that was fair,
But a most pure and living light
Without a name, by which the rare
And virtuous spirit flamed to sight.

And this vision of the "veiled virgin" led him on to the deeper truth of the profound sacramentalism of inter-sexual attraction; a phenomenon suggestive of the true marriage in consciousness between affinitized souls, and further, of these, when so wedded, with the Divine Soul, which is restless until its segregated rays coalesce in their original unity. He saw the divine in man seeking union, beneath all physical folds and beyond all sensual taint, with the divine in woman. In *Sponsa Dei* he discloses, at a stroke, the fallacy of human separateness, emphasises the unity of life, and reveals the truth that every inter-flash of love between men and women is a shadow of what, in a fine paradox, he calls "The love that is between Himself," i.e., Deity.

Browning learnt from multitudinous Humanity what Wordsworth could only find in the solitudes of Nature. Browning is an almost boisterous mystic, who "finds earth not grey but rosy" and is a perfect example of what William James termed the "sky-blue soul." For him, love more than knowledge is the meaning of life, and he who finds it not loses what he lived for, and eternally must lose it. "Were knowledge all thy faculty, then God must be ignored: love gains Him by first leap." And yet no shallow enthusiast as some have thought; he who wrote the second "Guido" in *The Ring and The Book* must have faced all the ugly side of humanity. His great mystical passages are found in *Rabbi Ben Ezra*, *Abt Vogler*, *Easter Day*, the magnificent climax of *Saul*, and certain passages in *Paracelsus* such as the following:

> Truth is within ourselves; it takes no rise
> From outward things, whate'er you may believe,
> There is an inmost centre in us all
> Where truth abides in fullness; and around
> Wall upon wall, the gross flesh hems it in,
> This perfect clear perception
> And to know
> Rather consists in opening out a way
> Whence the imprisoned splendour may escape
> Than in effecting entry for a light
> Support to be without. —*Bk.* i, 728-737.
>
> I go to prove my soul
> In some time, His good time, I shall arrive
> He guides me and the bird. (*ibid.* 564, 5, 6.)

Passing by the more philosophical seeker-mystics such as Arnold and Coleridge, we may note some less well-known lines by that remote seer, Emily Brontë, who, isolated in the wild Yorkshire moors, bears witness to the call of Reality:

> Silent is the house: all are laid asleep:
> One alone looks out o'er the snow-wreaths deep,
> Watching every cloud, dreading every breeze
> That whirls the wildering drift, and bends the groaning trees.
>
> What I love shall come like visitant of air,
> Safe in secret power from lurking human snare;

What loves me, no word of mine shall e'er betray,
Though for faith unstained my life must forfeit pay.

Burn then, little lamp; glimmer straight and clear—
Hush! a rustling wing stirs, methinks, the air;
He for whom I wait, thus ever comes to me;
Strange Power! I trust thy might: trust thou my constancy.

Lastly, though by no means least, the great initiation comes, not from Nature or love, but through the doctrine and rites of the Faith. Of such was Francis Thompson, whose abject and penurious nights, spent in selling matches on the Embankment, yet rewarded him with insight into the Jacob's ladder pitched between Heaven and Charing Cross. It fell to him to exploit the vast mine of Catholic symbolism; and to describe the cosmos as a vast sanctuary wherein a primal and perpetual liturgy is daily chanted. Day is the officiating priest and the sun his monstrance, while our earth is a censer swung to and fro before the altar of the Most High:

Lo, in the sanctuaried East,
Day, a dedicated priest
In all his robes pontifical exprest,
Lifteth slowly, lifteth sweetly,
From out its Orient tabernacle drawn,
Yon orbèd sacrament confest
Which sprinkles benediction through the dawn;
And when the grave procession's ceased,
The earth with due illustrious rite
Blessed—ere the frail fingers featly
Of twilight, violet-cassocked acolyte,
His sacerdotal stoles unvest—
Sets, for high close of the mysterious feast,
The sun in august exposition meetly
Within the flaming monstrance of the West.

Thompson's gorgeous and exotic verse is perhaps the greatest justification extant of the *Via Dolorosa*, renunciation and cross as reconciliation of the conflicting opposites of the world's pain and joy. In the *Hound of Heaven* he describes, with terrible power, not so much the self's quest of Reality, as Reality's quest of the unwilling self; the tireless, remorseless hunting of the soul by the Divine

Love that will not let it go. This idea of the Love-chase wherein the spirit of man, " strange, piteous, futile thing," rushes in terror and all in vain from those " unhurrying, unperturbed Feet," connects with the mediaeval idea of God's *Ludus Amoris* with the soul and the " first terrible caress " which desolates and yet draws. As Dante passed in the street people whispered, " There goes the man who has been in hell," and to use Thompson's own words, to

> Drink the moonless mere of sighs
> And pace the places infamous to tell
> Where God wipes not the tears from any eyes
> Where-through the paths of dreadful greatness are,

seems, as all the greater mystics testify, to be a pre-requisite of the great awakening and pilgrim's progress.

Mr. Watts-Dunton declared that two opposite impulses govern men and poets alike, in their attitude to the world in which they find themselves ; either the impulse to take its phenomena unchallenged and for granted—or to confront those phenomena with eyes of inquiry and wonder. And the wealth of modern English mystical poetry proves that, in spite of all our supposed Philistinism and prosaic natures, the wonder-instinct, from which Plato said all philosophy starts, is very potent in the race. The Romantic Revival at the end of the eighteenth century which produced Scott, Coleridge, Wordsworth, Byron, Shelley, and Keats coincided largely with the shock and convulsion of the French Revolution. A similar revival seemed to be accompanying the upheaval caused by the recent war, in which scores of young men secretly occupied their spare time in writing verse—though they would have rather had faced any number of German shells than confess the fact—simply because, being English, they couldn't help it.

A race which continues even in the disillusionment caused by the War, and European unrest, to produce such writers as Masefield and the author of *Requiem* (to mention only two among many) is not falling behind others in mystical poetry ; and the great tradition is worthily carried on in such lines as these by Alfred Noyes :—

Come: come and see the secret of the sun
The sorrow that holds the warring worlds in one
The pain that holds Eternity in an hour.
One God in every seed self-sacrificed,
One star-eyed, star-crowned, universal Christ,
Re-crucified in every wayside flower.

A. H. E. LEE.

THE CHRYSOPAS

THERE is a gem, the Ethiops say,
Veils all its lustre from the day,
But ever, at the touch of night,
Shines glorious with an inner light.

So youth, we feared, had dimmed its fires,
In sunny days of smooth desires,
But in Earth's darkest, guiltiest hour
They leaped from latency to power.

Let not those fires, in gloom reborn,
Draw back their ardours with the morn;
What Youth has given may none forget;
Yet when was Earth more sin-beset?

THOMAS THORNLEY.

THE WEAK FLESH

FLESH, dost thou fear the wind,
Blowing with force unkind,
Will thy dreams shatter?
For those great dreams, indeed,
Surely Thou claimest meed
That does Thee flatter?

Know, Fool, if Soul be true,
Naught ill can well ensue
Though they be parted;
There is One over all
Who will not let Thee fall,
So be stout-hearted!

JOHN WILLWYN.

THE POET-SOUL : Part I

His mind is, as it were, coeval with the primary forms of things ; his imagination holds immediately from nature, and owes no allegiance but to the elements. . . . He sees all things in himself.

HAZLITT.

WHAT is this rare, lovely essence we delight in calling the Poet-Soul, this fragrant, delicate breath of noble, magnificent sublimity ? Is it a style, a mode of infinity, blown into our beings, graciously infused into certain men, the generous gift of a partial Supremity ? Or is it some fine, elusive quality, the exalted lights of human understanding, the superior, highest knowing and feeling given to man, yet that nevertheless can be sought and won, a finite, mundane acquisition ? We despair of ever knowing. What man so bold or presumptuous that he will affirm that this evanescent waft of the breath of the Gods, this Poet-Soul, so fragile, refined, and tenuous as to require infinite care and the nursing of infancy to keep its lofty spark aglowing—yet so hardy that it is inextinguishable, its delicate structure imperishable while he who has it still abides —*is* a gift of ecstasy wilfully instilled into the breasts of a tiny minority of dreamy, saddened men, and by the Gods, with cruelty, withheld from other men less fortunate ? Or is he so pretentious to assure us that this gleaming, effluent glory can be searched for by a mortal, found and then annexed to his being as a glowing torch might be ? It is no such substantial accession ; no acquirable, prosaic thing to be gained by rote ; no substance of fortune as is the metal which, though the appetite of its secrecy may gorge from a life its time and hopes and strength and in their places deposit sorrow, despair and death-like resignation, is yet possible of discovery. The persistent shovel may this treasure unearth and the quest is but the subject of laws and rules, geologic, insipid, and material.

But the golden gift of the Poet-Soul—— ? Herein our gold fields are the Empyrean ; our laws of quest none material, but the requirement is only that the prospector stay adamantly upon his path of search to find what he never will ; what never can be found without man's being wholly annexed, but what he already has unearthed if

he encloses within him aforehand the treasure. And our prospecting tools will be our innermost tongues and tellings, and our treasure-charts, naught else but those left behind by the Poet-Souls who have trod the trail before; the maps of the Poet-Souls who have gone. So then it is *not* to be found and earned by men, though their dry and prosaic industry truly merit it and would, in fields more common, earn them the trophy and victory. It is only to be revealed to those who already have ever possessed it and know of its presence; only a continually fresh consciousness and perpetual awakening to the glorious existence of the Poet-Soul is to be had, and then only by those in whom it always abided. As life, not to be gained by any formula or scheme nor even by any titanic labourings of wit or science, and whose only gift, to him already its proprietor, is that continual glowing message, that divine, perpetual song within us sent through every fibre of our being, the melody of which affirms that inwardly the light of being is burning and we are; the promise of being fulfilled by the promise itself: so is the Poet-Soul.

Well, then, this alternative; the Poet-Soul *is* the gift of Muse! The joys and delicate symphonies within us; the strange, ineffable tongues and languages; the wild, ecstatic understandings and raptures indescribable with meaning only to their possessors, ever esoteric, inscrutable and shrouded in a dancing, impenetrable veil of dazzling, silvery mystery to all others but the few who Know and have Felt, *are* the gifts of the Greater Powers, cruel to all but that tiny God-given colony.

Truly, then, did Plotinus state the case:

> Since all men from their birth employ sense prior to intellect, and are necessarily first conversant with sensibles, some proceeding no farther pass through life, considering these as the first and last of things, and apprehending that whatever is painful among these is evil, and whatever is pleasant is good; thus thinking it sufficient to pursue the one and avoid the other. Those, too, among them who pretend to a greater share of reason than others, esteem this to be wisdom, being affected in a manner similar to more heavy birds, who collecting many things from the earth, and being oppressed with the weight, are unable to fly on

high though they have received wings for this purpose from nature. And they are, however, unable to look on high, and as not possessing anything else which can afford them rest, they betake themselves together with the name of virtue, to actions and the election of things inferior from which they at first endeavoured to raise themselves, though in vain. *In the third class is the race of divine men.* Who, through a more excellent power, and with piercing eyes, acutely perceive the supernal lights to the vision of which they raise themselves above the clouds and darkness as it were of this lower world, and there abiding despise everything in these regions of sense ; being no otherwise delighted with the place which is truly and properly their own than he, who, after many wanderings, is at length restored to his lawful country. [This quotation from Plotinus will be found in *Select Works of Plotinus*, Bohn's Philosophical Library, 1895, London, George Bell and Sons. Chapter IX, pp. 182 and 183.]

He who has living imprisoned within him the Poet-Soul, no, he who is himself enmeshed and enslaved, a happy, heavenly convict, within the toils of his Poet-Soul, passes his life a dream ; a gliding, drowsy passaging through a strange and alien sea called " World " as the majestic, tranquil journey of white clouds dawdling serenely across the different blue. For he who is the master of the Poet-Soul is by his glorious slave enslaved ; he is in bonds and his chains of dreams and musings ; wild, mad feelings of infinity, futility ; the fetters of his cosmic soul feeling always the pulse of the greater universal throb ; the bondage of his eyes always perceiving the sad hopelessness of being ; the myth of traditions ; the freak of humanity ; the trick of life ; the consciousness of the awful problems of philosophy, mind, and faith ; the shipwreck of ideals ; these chains can no more be rent asunder than can the ship sail out of the seas and trespass regions that are waterless. He, neither, can ever steer himself out and beyond his sea upon which he must ever float and dream and wonder, and with awful terror be stalked, with awful hidden impulses be puzzled, with awful questions be torn ; by this sea is he ever bounded, limited, saddened, and chained, and yet by only it is he made illimitable, unbounded, joyous, *free!* Yea, the Infinite has come to Earth ! For this is Infinity !

But to what origin then shall we attribute the Poet-Soul ?

Innate, immortal, and infinite, or mundane, an accomplishment to be learnt and practised as are the rapier and tool? Physical or metaphysical, natural or supernatural? Neither, for we shall not admit of there being this—a problem. We shall rest and seek not, and in the calm and tranquillity of our subsidence we shall view the turbulence abate and its stillness and hush will leave us free to contemplate this monument of the heavens erected here below; we shall content ourselves with bathing in the wondrous, inspiring rays of this dazzling, brilliant sunshine, unquestioned and untormented, and allow ourselves the wild, elevating delight of this golden immersion in the fountain of the Poet-Soul.

Those who lave not in it, who can never bestow upon themselves the laureate of the Poet-Soul—their own inner consciousness of this spirituous being which performs, with the authorization of the highest universal sense, the accolade, being unborn—will question not, for they do not lovingly clasp these æsthetic bars that make of them the captives of the Gods; being in this fashion free, they are true slaves and serfs, and so in their thraldom they are scantily free. For of that of which not even a gleam of acquaintance is ours, either spiritually, intuitively, intellectually or sensibly, we cannot even speculate or wonder; they know not, and in ignorance, be they happy or sad, better or worse, they become automatically, and, despite their own purblind estimations, the most tragic, piteous losers in history; bankrupts in a specie that is universal, infinite, glorious, and mighty; paupers in a currency that is primate, towering and sovereign, transcendant, and omnipotent; destitute of the gold of the only being; penurious and poverty-stricken of the coin of the supernal aristocracy. The Muses have passed their tin cups by without donating. "But the light shineth in darkness and the darkness comprehendeth not."

What, then, if these aliens shall not speculate upon the Poet-Soul; what of the curiosity of the members themselves? But for those who are initiated to the cherishing of this celestial, hallowed beam all torments and curiousness and questions relating to it shall not exist and do not. As

the miser does not concern himself with the economics that graft stability upon his hoarded pile, nor more inquire into the chemistry of his silver, nor interest his greedy brain with engraving, the result of which he so often sees upon his currency, but as he unquestioningly contents himself and immerses himself in his hoarding and fondling and the joy he partakes thereof, so our divine men of the Poet-Soul shall query not as to the whence or why or wherefore of this ethereal strange being within them. But they shall take radiance, ecstasy, and glory at the feel of its movements, whispering, and breathing, akin to the strange, mad, delight of the Gods which is the insane joy, coupled with awful terror, known to the mother when the babe moves within her womb.

Those of the Poet-Soul shall stand on the pinnacle of the highest mountain drinking of the breeze blown from the lusty lungs of Calliope, Clio, and Erato ; they shall drowse, feasting of the view, and bathe in the warmth from the fires of the forge of Euterpe, Melpomene, and Polyhymnia, while Terpsichore, Thalia, and Urania shall work the bellows to form the blast.

And on the mountain-top they will drowse and feast and muse, and with the instruments of science, with the telescope that would mar the sight by limiting and magnifying it to unnatural sizes ; with the instruments of calculation that would measure the mountains and even the sun in whose beams they lave, they will have nothing to do.

Upon all this earth no men exist so inspired, joyous, and capable of such intense happiness, yet so subject to the first faint touch of pain and sorrow, so capable of such awful rending anguish, susceptible to such copious misery, all-engulfing woe, and the wretchedness that writhes the very roots of a being, as those of the Poet-Soul. They become a microcosm of the combined ills, tragedies, and melancholy of the universe—and so fine and delicate and tautly strung up and down their beings, are the silver cords of their Poet-Soul that with the first slight touch they will bring forth a response and reverberate long after, the echo amplifying the original strain.

Who possess the Poet-Soul? Of course, the times and instances wherein this Poet-Soul resided in, and for company had, an ability for expression are those of which we know. Heralded are their names. Lucky was their soul for this glorious outlet called genius, this sweet, noble gift of utterance and representation. For truly sad is the swollen river that never can flow out into the sea, express itself and cast off its mighty content into the destination, that all the waters may know of its existence and be cooled, freshened, given new promise and hope by its coming. Some of humanity's golden celestial waters have been but trickling streams, others soft, silently rippling rivers, and some have burst upon us, mighty torrents; but all genius, all Poet-Souls of a quality alike, the difference resided only in degree.

Thus have the heavens and any Gods therein fertilized, sweetened, and fecundated with the melodious showers from the supernal regions and the Deity's own fountain-head, this dry, illiterate, commonplace garden below; and these sacred, beautiful drops from Supremity's own stream have turned a barren, bigoted place into the fair, redolent, teeming Garden of Adonis, beautiful and fragrant, yet whose plants sadly wither and die. These dancing magic streams of globules, dropped with the gold of Knowing and Feeling, descending their inspired way from There to Here, men have named; each one bears a title. What a majestic shower! Let it flood! Deluge the Earth and destroy it *this* way! For the names of these waters are Milton, Kant, Shakespeare, and Plotinus; Dante, Plato, Da Vinci, and Michelangelo; Emerson, Hugo, Goethe, and Tolstoi; Galen, Descartes, Spinoza, and Bacon; Mohammet, Buddha, Christ, and Moses; Hegel, St. Augustine, and Malebranche; Coleridge, Saccas, Homer, and Hesiod; Savaronola, Voltaire, and Seneca; Rembrandt, Liszt, Beethoven, and Wagner! These but a few; many more who have gone, but failed to decipher their secret message, leaving us the code, knew it none the less.

And so he who cavils when we proclaim trumpet-wise, "The Infinite has shown Himself! He has come on

Earth!" knows not the fearfully beautiful meaning of these, His forms, or, knowing, he has heard but spoken the names; within his breast and locked in the innermost chamber of his heart resides no voice that extends itself outward to meet with the voices of these, and with them have a converse in the language of eternity; the tongue of Infinity and absolute Goodness; the voices which break the locks of mundanity and, as spirits, ghost-like, pass through and beyond them, transcend their physical barriers and glide, as shades, out to meet each other, rising invisibly, stealthily, above all earthly obstructions.

And what need for order or arrangement of these names? They are One, and chronology is of no meaning here nor in this region claims a place. I am not guilty of anachronizing; for the finite form called Time is an outcast here. They all have climbed different ladders only; one, the ladder of the Pen; another, the ladder of the Brush; others, the ladder of the Chisel; others, the ladder strung by Euterpe; still others the ladder of Faith and Drama; but all with these Jacob's ladders directed to the same Empyrean arrive in the same lofty region and, towering there, melt into one; the source of the Poet-Soul has been gained; the ministers, prophets, and envoys have returned; their message has been delivered! For these Poet-Souls, of paintings, of art, of science, of writing and poetry, of sculpture and music, are one; they immerge in *a* Poet-Soul, the universal One of which they were dispatched prophets; water drawn up from the sea to sweeten, freshen, and bless the dry land but which sweeps back to its source again.

When Thoreau said, "All transcendent goodness is one, though appreciated in different ways, or by different senses. In beauty we see it, in music we hear it, in fragrance we scent it, and in rare health the whole body feels it. The variety is in the surface or manifestation; but the radical identity we fail to express," he became the glorious thief who robs us of our purest gold; for the devil, perhaps, arranged his conception first that prior to us he would say what we now say, and feel what we now feel, and make our

estimation that of thieves or plagiarists although we swear the pulse is throbbing within us too.

See the Poet-Soul! He enters a great, silent library, deserted and unused, whose forsaken and musty atmosphere hurls him back across the centuries and again, as in the plays and poems of a reincarnation-bent, he lives anew amidst the splendour of the Predynastic Kingdoms of ancient Egypt and the Minoan Age; he flourishes with mighty Babylonia and feels the suffering and oppression of Israel before the Pharaoh, Rameses. He flushes with the clash of the Trojan War and marvels with the epic time of Homer. On down through the bloom and withering of mighty Greece he passes, beyond the Roman Empire, to live again the Renaissance and Mediaeval Ages; in England with the Saxons he trembles at great feudal lords and the name of William the Conqueror; he hears Saint Francis of Assisi and sees the great "Franciscans" born; he glories with Kubla Khan and suffers with Roger Bacon; beholds with Columbus a "Water route to India!" and mourns at Savonarola's pyre; with Copernicus he marvels; with the Pilgrim Fathers he prays; with Descartes he doubts; with Fox he worships; with Washington he hopes; with Lincoln he frees, and with Emerson he deploredly enters the sad, horrible glen of the grotesque and chimerical.

Into this great haunt of reveries enveloped with a funereal hush, where the ages lie sleeping entombed in monastic stillness and sombre repose upon the shelves; where great shafts of purple shade slant in through the watchful hangings, witnesses to the death-throes of a day, to turn the still, musty hall of centuries into a rusty chest where some fiend has secreted the wealth of a planet, the Poet-Soul treads, speechless and awed at the silent tumult raised by the tales of these other Poet-Souls; a deafening, uproarious disturbance caused by the high assembly seated on gold and leather thrones upon the shelves; he holds his ears and yet true sound is unexpressed, the chamber is dead calm.

Stifling the emotion of a mighty reverence for this stupendous convocation of emperors and aristocrats that surges forth to engulf him and embarrass his succumbing

virility by tears, he treads with slow, majestic wonder and solemn reverence through this solitary graveyard of these wondrous excellencies. Their silent, high dignity and wisdom both inspire and engulf his venerating soul till he feels with full potency the celestial, ineffable urge to prostrate his being with humble adoration at these shrines of the Sons of the Gods.

He feels the might and glory, the high, exalted nature of his impulse and his altars, and in token of his flooding reverence, with deep pride to express his gratitude and full respect, he performs, with humility, obeisance.

Into his consecrated temple he pursues a gait of sorrow and deep mourning, past the hallowed monuments of his love, the books, and all about him, in his holy sanctum, the everliving tomes peer forth and in the purple gloaming, not things of manufacture, the vomit of a press and bindery does he perceive, but the faces sublime of the sages, and the venerable voices of the hoary and gentle flock he hears whispering to him sublime words whose messages he can never translate. The sweet, sad, beautiful profundity of his pilgrimage sheds over him and he shudders, sickened, glad, with a mystic nausea that can be sweet. Then moments of rhapsody and wonder are followed by mad thoughts and meditations. The pure white is made sombre, sullied by the running in of the inevitable black, as is a clear, blue stream by the trickling in of a muddy gully. Slipping into the dark abyss, the swirling depths, inky and horrible ; falling, falling, suddenly and irretrievably into that hideous cavern men have called the philosophical thought par-excellence and of which we must tell, he drowns in a hideous sea of melancholy and almost palpable gloom. He writhes to extricate himself, but from this lone idea no Poet-Soul can ever free himself—the infinity past, the infinity to come and thus the grisly nugacity of All.

He sees stark, mad futility and all it signifies to reasoning men, and seeing this the anger and dreadful impotency turn him to an ugly, enraged maniac. He thinks in terms of ultimates and his language is a thundering, cosmic roar.

Not for the first time, but ever anew, the Great Thought overwhelms him, and speaking at first tremulously as a soft soliloquy, the oil of magnitude and true realization is poured upon his fires of despair and woe; his voice rises higher and higher, to proportions horrifying, until he reads to the heavens, from the roots of his very being, a shriek of agonizing hopelessness and questioning, cracking the monastic still with a bitter moan of grief.

For he sees in all its ultimate significance the awful vainness and nugacity, the utterly maddening futility of the great drama, the drama of being, life, and all they do embrace, and further is enraged by the engulfing sadness and horror of the mortality of even the mighty Poet-Souls. He is first enervated, then blinded, and finally horrified by the terrible enormity he conceives; thus he sends vibrating a maniacal yell of frenzy at the infinitude of his thoughts.

"These sweet beings have gone; been torn from the breast of the world where they afforded happiness, serenity, and love. How is this just? Is ultimately entire labour vain? Is it in any way possible that these mighty, blessed hearts of different relations, different souls, minds, and inspirations have been but men of the same filthy clay, corporeal, and mortal as the lowly rest? I deny it—I deny it, I say!—but—but——" He chokes and sobs. "As the balance of miserable, finite men with eyes lowered to the earth, these celestial spirits, so noble, so knowing, so delicate, who never did completely leave the womb of Cælestis, with their eyes raised to the heavens, their souls aloof to the stars, did but live the same, mean, mortal span and then depart? But then, *they* will return. No? No? Are they passed on for infinity? Always? These minds? I tell you this is hideous! It is not sane; it is cruelty and madness. A fiend is at work somewhere and, oh! when once I find his rotten soul——! These men were as Gods, their presence illumined the earth; we are in darkness! But the God himself is cruel who brings eternal night! Do not say He has taken them lest I revile impiously the Founder of the Universe! How am I to suffer these fierce thoughts? These beings were immortal, yet we fear their

mortality ; I mourn as though they died. These lights of mankind—calumniate not this adoration, for you, too, have used their wicks for light that was the burning of their beings—we must reverence and mourn, and I cannot bear this fiendish idea that they are gone, that everlastingly agonizes me and rends my hopes and placidity. It is horror and madness. No ! they are here, here in these tombs they builded with their souls and left to us to love and perpetuate. Time has done it ! He is the foul son of Hell that robbed us of our firstborn ! Miserable creature, Time, corruptor of life, you rotten spawn of Apollyon, do not taunt me with the insane thought that you are God's lone blasphemy ! You alone are the Satan of all fables. Thief of love and youth, memories and beauty, dreams and hopes and life. But this time you have been cheated of your pay ! You have not bereft us of our tongues of wisdom, for they are here ! Here upon these shelves our eyes and hearts and souls have been preserved, embalmed, but, low, base creature, not mummified for they have spoken since you stole them like a thief ; they do speak, are speaking now. We need not say farewell to them for ever. We shall keep back our tears and sobbing, not because in this your abominable being would gloat, your sapping thirst be satisfied, but because our dead are alive, alive, I say, alive —alive !—our mourning is an illusion ; we shall celebrate ! For the pen and brush and chord have tricked you of your filthy demand ! You can rot their bones, turn their beautiful, childlike faces and soft, wise eyes and noble beards to dust ; eat with your rotten fangs their kindly heads away ; throw them in hell if you wish, you are too late ! They have outwitted you and put their true remains into our sacred keeping ; these pages, notes, and oils are they and these, their thoughts, souls and feelings, your dirty talons cannot ever touch ! For there they stand, mighty mausoleums, indelibly inscribed upon those pages to remain in the sunshine until the sun shall shine no more ! "

Hear, behold, the Poet-Soul !
His thoughts and words credentials of his worth.

J. CHARLES DAVIS.

EDITH CAVELL

I DOUBT if pomp and ceremony
Gave her happiness—the trail of men,
Crowds pushing, stiff salutes, the praise of scribes,
Some prayers formally chanted,
Statues and inscriptions. All her life
Was alien from these. Nor are these signs
That her example influences us.

The patriot who acclaims her sacrifice
And passes then to talk
With bitterness of " German murderers "
Is not a follower of Him
Who stood before the Governor. He
Disclaimed all bitterness. So did our Edith.
Should we harp upon His death,
As if the one oblation of Himself
Was just a crime to blacken Pilate's name
And curse Iscariot for ?

She was an ordinary English nurse,
And her compassion was a woman's gift
Shared by her sisters. Accident
(We call it that) made her the legatee
Of what they did who made the war. She acted
As others would have acted in her place.
Even her patience and her heedlessness
Of sordid things were common. If we miss
The impulse of her mind our praise is stupid.
She sought the truth in men.
She found it in a plea like Jesus Christ's :
To be a patriot is not enough.

ALLEN BROCKINGTON.

The verse of the late Dr. Morris Cock (*Poems*, Mayhew, 5s.) reveals a sensitive and appreciative nature, and a poet who was well equipped to put his thoughts into appealing verse. The most noteworthy features of the book are those poems which display to us Dr. Cock's deep religious feelings and his great love for all the beauties of wood and field. The volume will provide a fitting memorial for those who knew and loved him.

MODERN GREEK POETRY—VIII

POLYLAS—MARCORAS—MABILIS

TO-DAY we come back to Corfu, the beautiful island which we left immediately after its union with Greece. Up to that day it was not only the capital of the small *Ἰόνιον Κράτος* (Ionian State), but also the seat of the *Ἰόνιος Ἀκαδημία* (Ionian Academy) founded by Lord Guilford.

The fifth Earl of Guilford (1766-1827) was indeed one of the leading English Philhellenes, having been one of the founders of the *Φιλόμουσος Ἑταιρεία* at Athens in 1814, of which he became president, using as his only title "*πολίτης Ἀθηναῖος*" (Athenian citizen). The Ionian Academy, which gave a considerable number of well-educated men to Hellenism, raised Corfu to the level of a first-class intellectual centre. Previously, as we have seen, Ionian young men were obliged to resort to Italian Universities and carry on their studies in Italian. But the Academy, by cultivating Greek, also developed the political Panhellenic idea, the *μεγάλη ἰδέα*, the realization of which began with the union of the Ionian Islands to the Greek kingdom, and will be completed when Constantinople, the true centre of Hellenism, once more becomes its capital.

Besides the professors of the Academy, some of whom were eminent men—like Braïlas, Œconomides, Asopios, —there lived also a few Italian fugitives—like Giuseppe Regaldi and Niccolo Tomaseo, the editor of the folk-songs.

All of them look upon Solomos as on infallible Pythagoras in artistic matters. It goes without saying that the young Greeks who surrounded him *jurabant in verba magistri*. Amongst them, besides Julius Typaldos and Aristotle Valaoritis, whom we have seen, were Manesis, Guartanos, and especially two others, of whom we are going to speak, Jacovos Polylas and Gerasimos Marcoras. They, too, like Valaoritis and Typaldos, wrote elegies upon the death of their master.

They both were born in 1826, and belonged to noble families. This was then very important in the Ionian Islands and especially in the capital, because of the long

Venetian traditions. The forefathers of Polylas were fugitives from Constantinople, those of Marcoras had come from Nauplia. Neither Polylas nor Marcoras were under the necessity of practising any profession, which in the aristocratic atmosphere of Corfu would have been considered as beneath their dignity. In both families there existed artistic and literary traditions.

But the two men were very different. Polylas was energetic and inquiring; he studied many languages and literature; simultaneously he translated from ancient Greek, Latin, German, and especially English, and, of course, knew Italian and French. His chief characteristic was an inclination to philosophy. He had not been a regular student in Universities, and was almost a self-educated man; perhaps for this reason he had always principles of his own in art, style, and life, and always endeavoured as a preacher to propagate them.

It was Polylas who introduced Solomos to German æstheticism, translating for him works of Schiller and Hegel. From them he always retained a lofty conception of art, but it is difficult to understand what school he really followed. After the death of Solomos, Polylas was the first editor and commentator of his works. Without his notes it would have been impossible to conjecture the proper connection of the fragments of Solomos. He added also an introduction about the life and the views of the poet, in which, instead of giving details of the man with whom he had worked and lived, he praises his character and virtues. If Solomos as a man is still a shadowy form, this is the result of the philosophical or rather metaphysical tendency of Polylas.

In 1854 Polylas published a translation of Shakespeare's *Tempest*, and many years later on, a translation of *Hamlet* in a new verse—with a long introduction in which he tries to give a new explanation of the character of the Danish prince. But I doubt very much whether his new explanation is right, and his new verse is as rhythmical as Mabilis thought it to be.

In politics Polylas was a nationalist. He founded a

club, which he called *Ἀναγέννησις* (Rebirth) and published a journal of the same name, which was marked by a profound love of his country but also by a good deal of party spirit. Thus he came into collision with Valaoritis; he wrote not only articles against him, but also parodies of his poems in a satirical journal "*Κώδων*" (*The Bell*). The fire of Valaoritis was not of a kind to please this sober man. He also ridiculed the odes of Kalvos, alien to his own metrical theories. Polylas was a born censor and had all the virtues and defects of a critic with preconceived opinions; but he was usually guided by moral convictions concerning art and life.

After the annexation of the Islands with Greece he was five times in succession elected a member of the Greek parliament as a friend of Tricoupis; but he abandoned him after Tricoupis took up with Theotokis, his future successor; Polylas was an opponent of Theotokis, and at last was defeated in the struggle, failing to be elected even as a municipal councillor. Thus he was left to preach his own ideas.

Polylas was rather the initiator of a small Corfiote poetical school than a poet himself, and thus in his last years he exercised a considerable influence. All his pupils, Nicolas Coyevinas, Georgios Kalosgouros and Lorenzos Mabilis, following his example, tried their powers at translations rather than original poems, applying the metrical and linguistic theories of their master. Because even in his style Polylas was not in accordance with the other partisans of the demotic language—especially M. Psichari. Although he was not a religious man, as the other pupils of Solomos were, he preserved a profound respect for the language of the Church. From it he borrowed not only words but also grammatical forms. When Roïdès published his *Εἴδωλα* (*Idols*, 1893) in which he seemed very radical in theory, Polylas wrote a severe criticism of the book. He was always guided by his personal ideas, in which he had immense confidence, believing that the grace of Solomos had entered into him.

The best of his prose works are three short novels,

which he published in the periodical *Hestia* in 1891 and 1892, *Ἕνα μικρὸ λάθος* ("A small mistake") *Συγχώρεσις* ("Forgiveness"), and *Τὰ τρία φλωριά* ("The three florins"). Original poems after his *Νεκρικὴ ᾠδή* (*Funeral ode*) to Solomos are only two sonnets *Μία πρώτη ἀγάπη* (*A first love*) and *ὁ Ἐρασιτέχνης* (*the Dilettante*) in which he admirably describes his own poetical flights.

II

Gerasimos Marcoras, the son of George Marcoras—who was a distinguished man of the Ionian State—after studying law in Italy for three years, returned to Corfu in 1852 on account of the death of his brother, who also was a writer of verse. Gerasimos was immediately received into the circle of Solomos, who was a friend of his family. He even took part in an amateur theatrical company, but he was so shy that he never dared to show his verses to the master.

Only after the death of Solomos did he publish an ode addressed to him *Τὸ πρῶτο Ψυχοσάββατο*, following in this the example of all the other pupils. He continued to write occasional verses for his friends, but did not publish anything; a satirical poem against the President of the Senate *Ὁ Λέλεκας καὶ ὁ Σπαρτσίνης*, however, became known. Not until after the annexation of the islands did he publish an ironical poem denouncing the destruction of the historical fortresses of Corfu, and when King George visited the town for the first time he wrote one of his most beautiful poems. He then lapsed into silence till 1875, when he published his longest poem *Ὁ Ὅρκος* (*The Oath*).

The Oath is a long poem, consisting of 1800 verses and divided in two parts, and is entitled *διήγημα* (a novel); but its plot can be sketched in a few lines.

After the great Cretan revolution which lasted three years (1866-69), the women and children, who had found asylum in free Greece, returned home. Among these, sleeping on the deck of a steamer, there was a girl, Eudocia, who had left her betrothed Manthos in Crete. The exiles returned but found many a hero dead. Manthos, too, had

perished in the monastery of Arcadi, which had been blown up by the abbot when the Turks succeeded in breaking in. Eudocia goes to the ruins, beholds her lover in a vision and he narrates to her the whole tale of the disaster. At the end the girl, too, dies on the spot and the souls of both kiss her dead body.

How the phantom of Manthos narrates so long a story and even his own visions and how the girl expires, when she wishes to die, are matter-of-fact questions which the reader never thinks of addressing to the poet, because he feels that the poet is in a state of ecstasy and is singing, like the Ionian that he is, a lofty and patriotic song, in Corfiote dialect, playing on a splendid organ. Marcoras also is inspired by the Church. The Cretan epic is for him not a struggle between Greeks and barbarians, as it is for Valaoritis, it is rather a contest between the Cross and the Crescent. His chief hero is the Abbot of the monastery—an ideal saint—who waves the Greek standard bearing a cross, and prays : *Πόσο εἶναι, Μάνθο, ἡ δύναμι τῆς προσευχῆς μεγάλη!* (" How great (he says) is the power of prayer ! ")

This power of prayer and religion causes Marcoras—as it does Typaldos—to see visions *μὲς στὴ μάνα τοῦ φωτὸς* (within the fountain head of light) ; to see and hear angels' flying, singing, loving, and even weeping for the Cretans. Even the shining of the stars seems to him to be angels' glances. On the contrary, the Turks remind the poet of the demons of Hades,

τὴν ὥρα
Ποῦ τοῦ θανάτου ὁ Νικητὴς ἐπῆε στὴν μαύρη χώρα.

(" at the hour, when the Conqueror of death entered the dark country.") The poet, who in his lighter poems invokes the Muse, in *The Oath* invites the man's guardian angel—*l'ange gardien*—to sing to him the dreams of the sleeping Cretan women and children.

All these pictures, however, are not displeasing, because they are not unappropriate to the poem. But thus the patriotic subject becomes chiefly religious, and no Greek, who is not an Ionian, feels quite at home. For my part I confess that, though I feel the hymns of the great Byzan-

tine religious poets very natural, yet after reading Marcoras's *Oath* and other Ionian poems, their heaven strikes me as somewhat strange. It is not very far removed from the Earth. At the end of *The Oath* the heroine very quickly reaches her celestial abode and is received by the Spirits with songs.

Thus the art of Marcoras must be judged as a Christian art with all its advantages and defects. It is absolutely without plasticity. Manthos, the dead lover, who narrates so much is a *vision*. but the girl Eudocia, who listens to him is not much more. But there is a fine dreaminess, a true pathos, and a real exaltation in the poem. Marcoras knows well how to strike the high note; he apostrophizes the sea, hope, his heroine, the angels, δέσποινα θεία,- θεέ, ὦ Χριστὲ ("O Holy Virgin, O God, O Christ!")

This is no easy task; to hold converse with these divine persons, you must have been introduced by the *altissimo poeta*. As a matter of fact, Marcoras made a deep study of Dante and seems to have been especially impressed by the *Paradiso*.

Thus in his verse, like that of his friend Typaldos, the Italian influence is felt. But whereas Typaldos, who speaks of love and desire, is sweet, Marcoras is lofty and noble. Even his fine descriptions usually terminate with an elevated verse. For instance, a picture of night ends as follows: 'Όλα τὰ πλάσματα, Θεέ, στὸν ἥσκιο σου ἀποκάτου ("All creatures, O God, sleep beneath thy shadow)."

Some of the pages of *The Oath* are so pathetic that they bring tears to the reader's eyes. But you feel that they must be sung, or at least must be loudly recited, as the poet used to recite them. Nevertheless the poem, which contained such beautiful parts, remained unknown to the great public, until 1890, when Marcoras published his Ποιητικὰ ἔργα (Poetical works) at Corfu. The volume gave rise to a great admiration at Athens, where the poet's name became known a few months earlier through a lecture of M. Velianitis. The volume also contains another epic poem Ἀρίων (*Arion*) and small masterpieces. A few years later Marcoras published his second and last volume,

to which he gave the name *Μικρὰ ταξείδια* (*Short Travels*) because, he said, he avoided to write long poems, fearing that he might leave them unfinished.

III

Lorenzo Mabili, a pupil of Polylas and student of philosophy, has no long history. His grandfather was a Spaniard and came to Corfu, as consul of Spain. But his father became judge of the Ionian State and married a Corfiote lady belonging to the noble Capodistria family. The poet was born in Ithaca and educated at Corfu. Thus he became the most ardent Greek patriot and Corfiote citizen whom I ever met. He kept his Corfiote pronunciation to the end and was always a devoted member of the Reading Club (*Ἀναγνωστικὴ Ἑταιρεία*), in which, when a pupil, he was introduced to Polylas. After a short residence at Athens, Mabilis lived in Germany for 12 years and studied the science of language and philosophy; but true to Polylas's teaching, remained always a student of universal poetry and an unpublished translator of foreign poets. After returning to Corfu he continued to write, and began to publish now and then a sonnet. He knew Petrarch, but was more influenced by the French Parnassiens and especially Heredia who also was of Spanish origin. As he was well to do, he sacrificed weeks on the chiselling of a single sonnet. He sought a rich rhyme for days on end and copied and recopied every poem. But sometimes he was unable to decide definitely in favour of a word or phrase and wrote a second one in the margin as *variante*. I have been told that he once stopped the publication of a sonnet by telegram. He was the essence of honesty, kindness, and chivalry. He had also a handsome countenance; the calm of the Corfiote landscape was reflected in his blue eyes. But Mabilis's chief characteristic was his devotion to his principles. When he was elected a member of the Revisional Chamber in 1910, he was a zealous partizan of M. Venizelos and spoke with eloquence in defence of the demotic language. He was able to fight a duel for the memory of Polylas or Solomos. For Greece he was ever

eager to fight. He took part in the Cretan revolution in 1897 and was wounded and later fought in the expedition of Epirus campaign. In 1912 he was in his fifty-third year, but he donned the red uniform of the Garibaldian and fought in the hope of entering Jannina. But happier still, he fell at Driscos refusing to retreat, on the 29th of November, pierced by two bullets. Thus he found the hero's death, which he praised in the case of his English friend Cl. Harris, who fell in 1897 in Epirus. In the Epod of an elaborate sonnet he said to Harris, " A bullet sent you, a hero, to the garden of Elysium." And when he himself was expiring he is reported to have said : " I expected many distinctions from this war, but not so great an honour as to die for my Greece."

After his death the Municipality of Corfu voted for and erected his bust, and all his works were published at Alexandria (Egypt) in a magnificent volume with portraits, accompanied by some of his letters. The volume contains an episode of Mahabharata (Nala and Damayanti) translated from Sanscrit, Robert Browning's *Saul*, fragments of Shelley, Virgil, Schiller, Goethe, Byron, Tennyson, Foscolo, Dante, Lenau, Leopardi, Uhland, and Bürger. It contains also some early poems of his own, very modest. But his fifty sonnets have indeed striking characteristics ; perfection of structure, concentration of meaning, many verbal compounds of his own, wonderful richness of rhyme and (let us add) clear signs of the poet's efforts to attain extreme finish. Macaulay said of the sonnets of Petrarch that they are all prepared with a similar sauce. The same may be said of the workmanship of his Corfiote imitator. Fortunately Mabilis is not in such a constant intercourse with angels as Typaldos and Marcoras, and, I think, only once he heard the laugh of angels and witnessed the joy of the cherubim ; but, like Polylas, he is very fond of *αἰθέρια, ἀνάερα, ἀνέσπερο φέγγος, ὑπέργειον ὄνειρο, μάγια, μαγεμένο θᾶμα* and *μυστήριο* (heaven, æther, the endless light of death, the supermundane dream, magic, the enchanted miracle and mysteries). As these words are chained down by the rhymes of the sonnets, I fear that they cannot

soar. But the poet will live by a few of his sonnets; those which picture some of the scenes and contain legends of his beloved island; *τὸ Καρδάκι, οἱ Ἔρμονες, τὸ Σωκράκι Ἡ Παλαιοκαστρίτσα* (a monastery of this name) and above all two real gems *Ἐλιὰ* (the olive tree, which is the ornament and the wealth of the island) and *ἡ Λήθη* (Oblivion) which embodies a popular tradition to the effect that the dead come and drink from a limpid fountain and forget all their sorrows.

These two sonnets would be enough to secure immortality to his noble memory. His heroic death was the befitting close of the whole sonnet of his life.

SIMOS MENARDOS.

THOMAS HARDY.

TO him men seemed vain fugitives from doom—
The playthings of ironic circumstance—
The sport of mocking gods, the dupes of Chance.
Yet peace was his on heaths with gorse a'bloom
By quiet streams and 'mid the woodland ways
Of that sweet Wessex where his heart still stays.

DUNCAN GREY.

We regret a line was dropped out of the Shakespeare sonnet by the Countess Marie van Bylandt, The Hague, Holland, printed in the May issue of THE POETRY REVIEW. It is reprinted below in, we hope, an accurate form:

Thou mighty flame too bright for this dull earth,
  Kindled by seraphs, illuming time and space
With all the glory of thy heavenly birth,
  That passing ages never will efface:
The lovers' tryst through thee immortal glows,
  Thy fiery brand still lights the strife of kings,
And evermore thy magic beacon strews
  Its glitt'ring stars upon the tempests' wings.
Thy gleam yet lurks within the leafy halls
  Where fairies dance and nimble elves flit by,
And o'er a royal castle's sombre walls,
  Hovers thy splendour clothed in majesty . . .
No pow'r, however bold, can England's heart dismay:
  Her rose will always bloom 'neath thy eternal ray!

A POETS' CALENDAR

September

1. Rd. Steele, d. 1729.
2. John Howard, b. 1726.
3. Robert Greene, d. 1592.
4. Chateaubriand, b. 1768.
5. Cardinal Richelieu, b. 1585.
6. Philip James Bailey, d. 1902.
7. Whittier, d. 1892.
8. Ariosto, b. 1474.
9. R. C. Trench, b. 1807.
10. Nicholas Biddle, b. 1750; Joanna Baillie, b. 1782.
11. James Thomson, b. 1700.
12. Sir William Dugdale, b. 1605.
13. John Hare, b. 1795.
14. Dante, d. 1321, Ebenezer Jones, d. 1860.
15. Arthur Henry Hallam, d. 1833
16. Anne Bradstreet, d. 1672.
17. Landor, d. 1864.
18. Dr. Johnson, b. 1709; F. B. T. Money-Coutts, b. 1852.
19. Hartley Coleridge, b. 1796.
20. E. C. Lefroy, d. 1891.
21. Edmund Gosse, b. 1849; Scott, d. 1832.
22. Chesterfield, b. 1794.
23. Euripides, b. 480 B.C.
24. Dean Milman, d. 1868.
25. Porson, d. 1808; S. Butler, d. 1680; Mrs. Hemans, b. 1793.
26. F. W. Faber, d. 1863.
27. Bossuet, b. 1627.
28. F. T. Palgrave, b. 1824.
29. Zola, d. 1902.
30. Bishop Percy, d. 1811.

October

1. Corneille, d. 1684.
2. Renan, d. 1892.
3. William Morris, d. 1896.
4. Guizot, b. 1787.
5. Horace Walpole, b. 1717.
6. Tennyson, d. 1892.
7. Poe, d. 1849.
8. Fielding, d. 1754.
9. Cervantes, b. 1547.
10. Herrick, d. 1674.
11. Sir Thomas Wyatt, d. 1542.
14. Samuel Phillips, d. 1854.
15. Virgil, b. 70 B.C.
16. Robert Fergusson, d. 1774.
17. Sir Philip Sidney, d. 1588.
18. Justus Lipsius, b. 1547.
19. Dean Swift, d. 1745; Sir T. Browne, b. 1605; Leigh Hunt, b. 1784.
20. Froude, d. 1894.
21. S. T. Coleridge, b. 1772; Edmund Waller, d. 1687.
22. Lord Holland, d. 1840.
23. William Prynne, d. 1699.
24. F. T. Palgrave, d. 1897.
25. Chaucer, d. 1400; Macaulay, b. 1800.
26. Dr. Doddridge, d. 1751.
28. Erasmus, b. 1467.
29. Keats, b. 1795; Sir Walter Raleigh, d. 1618.
30. T. E. Brown, d. 1897; Adelaide Proctor, b. 1825.
31. John Evelyn, b. 1620.

Inquiries respecting autumn verse-speaking examinations in schools and provincial centres should be addressed to The Registrar, The Poetry Society, 16 Featherstone Buildings, London, W.C.1, at an early date to enable adequate arrangements to be made.

Owing to the holidays, the adjudication on the young people's verse is carried forward to the next issue, and additional MSS. will be received up to September 30th in connection with the scheme notified on p. 148.

AN AMERICAN SINGER : FRANK STANTON

IT is always difficult to write of a poet in his lifetime, and to do him complete justice, without slight bias toward either thoughtless censure or unconsidered praise. But the poet who comes to us with such a frank abandon as that expressed in lines like these :—

Keep on lookin' for the bright, bright skies,
Keep on hopin' that the sun'll rise ;
Keep on singin' when the whole world sighs—
An' you'll get there in the mornin' !

is not one to be affronted by freedom of speech from a mere critic !

Frank Stanton is frankly a journalist. As a lad (he is still in his robust prime) he conceived various projects for his future career, and he was educated among the negroes and the rough-and-ready rustics of Georgia. But, after wavering between various aspects of agriculture and business, he turned to literature. He has a happy prose touch, which makes the invocation of his *causeries* in the American newspapers a very sure thing. Yet he could never forego his love of verse, and he has always sung as the birds sing : because they are happy and because they must.

I remember the thrill with which I first heard Sheridan Gordon's setting of his simple little lyric:—

Sweetes' li'l feller,
Everybody knows :
Don' know *what* to call him,
But he's mighty like a rose !

Here seemed to be a phenomenon that was well worth the attention of the musical public—an appeal of the purest and most passionate kind, couched in language that at first hearing appeared to have no possible relationship with either Art or Technique ! But I soon found that the writings of no American poet of our own generation have achieved such wide popularity. He is known to a public who has never heard of Longfellow or Holmes or Poe or Bryant—for his verses make their appearance in the daily and weekly newspapers, and are quoted from mouth to mouth for their aptness to the workaday world around us. Take the following homely little story, couched in the simplest of language :—

When Jim was dead—
" It sarved him right," the neighbours said,
An' 'bused him fer the life he'd led,
An' him a-lying there at rest

E 24

With not one rose laid on his breast!
Hard words, an' lots of them, they said
When Jim was dead.
"Jest kill'd himself!" "Too mean to live";
They didn't have one word to give
In comfort, while they crowded near
An' look'd on Jim a-lyin' there!
"Ain't any use to talk," they said:
"He's better dead!"

But suddenly the room grow'd still,
While God's white sunshine seem'd to fill
The dark place with a gleam of life,
An' over him she bent—*Jim's Wife!*
An' with her lips laid close to his—
Jest like he know'd an' felt the kiss—
She sobb'd—a touchin' sight to see:
"Oh, Jim was *always* good to me!"
I tell you, when *that* come to light
It kinder set the dead man right;
An' round the weepin' woman they
Throw'd kindly arms o' love that day;
An' fallin' fast as hers, they shed
The tend'rest tears—when Jim was dead!

Simple as it is, a poem of that kind can carry comfort straight to the aching heart. It has a childlike earnestness that betrays itself even to the most sophisticated reader.

Indeed, there is in Mr. Stanton's work a note of Hope and Joy and Love that compensates for its careless structure. Dashed off, as these lyrics are, in the heat of literary work, sometimes in the very office where he has to handle such uninspiring subjects as the rise and fall of markets, a change of local government, or a new election, these verses are yet dew-drenched and fragrant as the morning rose.

It's happy every mornin',
  Every evenin' I will be;
Fer I hoes the corn fer Sally,
  An' she bakes the bread fer me.

It's a little farm I'm runnin',
  An' the soil is kinder rough;
But I'm workin' it fer Sally,
  An' the crop grows fast enough.

All day long I hear her singin',
An' a lot of joy it brings;
Fer there ain't no song that's sweeter
Than the song that Sally sings.

Fer she sings because she's happy,
An' I stop the plough and hoe
When I hears her, feelin' thankful
That's it's *me* has made her so!

She keeps the pails all shinin',
An' the bees a-workin' hard;
Calls the cows up fer the milkin',
Trains the roses in the yard.

An' she keeps furever singin'
When the household troubles press;
With a kiss fer little fingers
Always tuggin' at her dress.

Oh, it's happy every mornin'
Every evenin' I will be;
Fer I hoes the corn fer Sally,
An' she bakes the bread fer me!

The ordinary critic can only stand aloof from work of that kind. We should be told (if we were told anything) that colloquialism in verse is utterly indefensible, that an attempt to reproduce humble speech can only be justified by the last refinement of technique, and that Mr. Stanton pays no regard whatever to the demands of literary art. Here is a tone and a style, the hide-bound critic would cry, with upraised hands, which is recognizable only as mere "hack" work. Scarcely would that critic grant it the right of reproduction in book form. But listen to *this* lyric from the same pen, and show me finer work from the classicists and stylists of our period:

A Bouquet

Red roses, wherefrom the dew drips,
Staining the turf at my feet,
You were never so red as her lips—
Or so sweet!

Blue violets, tender and true—
A mirror of sun-sprinkled skies,
Do you think you were ever so blue
As her eyes?

Rare lilies, in garments of white,
  Which winds with warm kisses beguile,
Have you yet known a sunbeam as bright
  As her smile?

Kiss, lily, rose, violet—kiss!
  Ere time doth your beauty destroy,
For her white hand hath touched you, and this
  Is your joy!

Every little word of that poem aids the picture: the epithets are inevitable; the music becomes more and more audible as we progress, until the culminating chord vibrates in the pathos of the dear word *joy*! Frank Stanton need not fear criticism while he can write so finely as that! It is easy to talk about literary art, about style, about balance, about *nuance*—but who will dare define them? Who would care to

Gild refined gold, paint the lily,
Throw perfume on the violet?

It is Stanton's earnestness, sincerity, simplicity, that speaks to our hearts, and no reader of even the flimsiest trifle from this poet's pen needs to be told that he is not stringing rhymes as a mere exercise. He comes to us with the nimble feet and the dancing eyes of eternal youth; he sings with the clear piping of a child; and yet he has the deep soulful earnestness of a man who has lived and loved and suffered. Listen to this heart-cry:—

A little way to walk with you, mine own—
  Only a little way,
Then one of us must weep and walk alone
  Until God's day.

A little way! It is so sweet to live
  Together that I know
Life would not have one withered rose to give
  If one of us should go.

And if these lips should ever learn to smile,
  With thy heart far from mine,
'Twould be for joy that in a little while
  They would be kissed by thine!

It is this very simplicity of diction which lends to Mr. Stanton's verse its instant and compelling lure—the power of making simple things seem strange to us, and strange things appear simple.

Sweetheart, 'twas but a while ago—it scarce seems yesterday,
Though now my locks are white as snow and all your curls are grey—
When, walking in the twilight haze, ere stars had smiled above,
whispered soft : " I love you," and you kissed me for that love.

I have shown my readers that Mr. Stanton is far too easy a poet to quote from. These lyrics lend themselves so readily to the purpose that I must consider the exigences of space. We can all be grateful to this singer of America, and hope that his voice will go on ringing over the leagues of ocean that may divide our bodies, yet only serve to link our hearts.

J. M. STUART-YOUNG.

HANDS

(*Transportation's Tribute to Service*)

TRANSPORTATION, the Child of Commerce,
Addresses his masters, the Craftsmen :

The love of Labour and Necessities of Life
Begot my sire, Industry, and gave unto me my being.
The travail-cries of Commerce, my mother,
Were the whining of fiery rivets speeding to the hammer,
The gurgle of molten metal rushing into the moulds,
The groan of giant timber falling in the forest.
I throve on steam hissing from her breasts ;
I was flogged by river-boat paddles ;
She hushed my wails with the thunder on wheels
And the purring of powerful motors,
Ye, my Masters, who toil at my bidding,
Your greatness is my exaltation,
Your myriad hands and your brain,
The saving and strength of all nations.
Ye, the casters of bread on the water,
So especially blest your striving
And sweating and straining and giving
That your tithe will return in abundance,
In fullness and riches past dreaming !

I am the Power, Transportation !
Achievement's fruit lades my branches ;
Sprung from the soil am I,

Where all things have their beginning,
Sustainer of life itself,
The heart and likewise the spirit,
Bringing earth's corners close
For the profit and pleasure of humans;
Bearing the scutcheon of Service
With the crest of Strong Hands upon it,
Hands of the Loyal, the True,
The unceasing hands of the Worker.
Behold me in my vital manhood,
Ye bulwarks of civilization!
The electrons that leap from my eyes
Foretell æons of limitless progress.
My limbs, satin-smooth as fine steel,
Stride fleet as the wind through vast spaces;
My wings, like spun flax, cleave the blue
On errands of Mankind unending.
For my heart is the Need of the World,
My arteries surge with her traffic,
My feet running swift to the task
Which ye shaped and built me to follow—
The part of receiving and sending
The product of Toil's rich outpouring.
For the orchard and grain-field must blossom
And give of their bounty, or wither.
The secret of living is serving
To withhold and not give is to perish.

Ye who strive with hearts, hands; and wisdom
Are the chosen of all that are chosen;
These are my food and my strength,
My motive force, my inspiration.
So, stand then, together and triumph
Before every city and kingdom,
And be ye assured of reward,
For verily thus is it written!

L. G. TALIAFERRO.

SIR CHARLES ELTON AND HIS FRIENDS

SIR CHARLES ELTON, Bart, who lived in the mid-nineteenth century, in the beautiful Somerset manor of Clevedon Court, which is mentioned in Doomsday Book, was a poet and a friend of poets whose name should be remembered in our day.

A branch of an ancient family in Herefordshire, the Eltons migrated early in the seventeenth century from the neighbourhood of Ledbury to Bristol, in which city seven members of the family were in their turn Masters of the Merchant Venturers, six were Mayors of Bristol, and several were Members of Parliament. Sir Charles Elton, who was the sixth baronet, was at Eton with Henry Hallam, the historian, whose son Arthur was the human inspiration behind one of our greatest poems. Sir Charles afterwards held a commission in the 48th Foot and served with distinction in the trenches in Holland under the Duke of York in 1799. It is, however, as a poet, and more particularly, perhaps, as a friend of poets, that Sir Charles Elton should inspire the grateful regard of readers of THE POETRY REVIEW. His fine culture, his scholarly mind, his genial disposition, and his gift of genuine sympathy for the poetic and creative spirit, won for him not only the respect and the admiration, but also the affection and the intimate confidences of several of the leading men of letters of his day.

To Sir Charles's home in Clifton (and later to Southampton), before he succeeded to the baronetcy and came to take up residence at Clevedon Court, there came, daily, a procession of gifted folk for learned converse and gay entertainment " which startled the propriety and awakened the echoes of York Crescent, Clifton," in which the family lived. Among the greatest of his friends at Clifton was Walter Savage Landor, whose delightful conversation and accommodating manners were the source of much pleasure to all the members of the family, including the schoolgirl daughters in whose early literary efforts the poet evinced a charming interest. In fact, when the Eltons went to Southampton, Landor, who " praised Clifton beyond measure," remarking that Torquay was the only place in any degree to be compared with it, said that he could never return there, so great would be his sense of melancholy on account of the absence of his hosts.

Coleridge who, presumably, rented his honeymoon cottage in Clevedon from the Eltons, was also, at times, the guest of Sir Charles, and a story is told concerning a visit which Coleridge paid to his friend before delivering himself of one of his famous lectures in Bristol. While seated at dinner, Coleridge embarked upon a long and an eloquent critique on the subject of *Hamlet*, lasting about three-quarters of an hour. On attending the lecture the same evening the

host was surprised to find that it was in every respect the same discourse as that with which the poet had entertained him at his own dinner table! He afterwards discovered that this was Coleridge's invariable custom.

Tennyson was evidently greatly enamoured of the society of Sir Charles Elton, for in a recorded conversation he refers to him as "Our dear, charming, unequalled, and altogether unresembled patriarch!" It is reported that on one occasion Tennyson went up to Sir Charles and, placing his hands upon his host's bald head, remarked: "You must have done many a foolish thing in your time, with that great big bump of benevolence of yours!"

Before the members of the Elton family Tennyson gave a reading of *Maud*, and all the guests were delighted with the prospect with the exception of Carlyle, who insisted upon taking his usual early morning walk while the reading was in progress and upon having a companion to accompany him! As each of Tennyson's poems came out they were eagerly read by the baronet and his friends and relations, and probably the poet was indebted to the Eltons, as well as to the Hallams, for the fact that he was enabled to describe so atmospherically within the pages of *In Memoriam*, the resting place at Clevedon of the remains of Arthur Hallam. In *Tennyson: A Memoir* the following occurs: "I myself didn't see Clevedon until years after the burial of A. H. H., Jan. 3rd, 1834, and then, in later editions of *In Memoriam*, I altered the word 'chancel' (in stanza lxvii) to 'dark church.'" Moreover, the human story relating to the creation of *In Memoriam* is closely associated with the name of the Eltons; for was not Sir Charles Elton's sister, Julia, the mother of Tennyson's friend, whose "tablet glimmers to the dawn" in the grey old church of St. Andrew—once a fishermen's chapel—which drowses between two hills at Clevedon, with a long glimpse at Mendip and a wide gaze out to sea! Within the South Transept there may be read the lengthy epitaph which Henry Hallam wrote to one "too early lost for public fame; but already conspicuous among his contemporaries for the brightness of his genius, the depth of his understanding, the nobleness of his disposition, the fervour of his piety and the purity of his life." Beside this epitaph to Tennyson's friend appears the memorial to the grief-stricken father who lost his two sons at an early age in a foreign land. The sentences of its contrastingly brief tribute were composed by Alfred, Lord Tennyson.

Henry Hallam and all the members of his family were, of course, constant visitors to Clevedon Court, in which Sir Charles Elton, his children, his predecessors and his successors have left their reminiscences in the shape of an astonishing accumulation of interesting

literary treasures, from a thing so sublimely ridiculous as a tobacco-pipe which inspired the great Sir Walter Scott to a possession so sombrely beautiful as the original MS. of some verses which were written for Lady Edmund Elton by Andrew Lang on the subject of "Clevedon Church":

> But there hath he, who won the sleepless love,
> Slept for these fifty years;
> There is the grave that hath been wept above
> With more than mortal tears.
>
> And far below you hear the channel weep
> And all his waves complain—
> As Hallam's dirge through all the years must keep
> Its monotone of pain.

Other treasures include remnants of the excise books used by Robert Burns, an uncompleted anagram by the rustic and ill-fated John Clare, an epistle in which Tennyson is seen in great haste to be "off to the Derby," letters bearing the signatures of Wordsworth, Coleridge, Southey, Longfellow, T. E. Brown, the beneficent Mr. Cottle, and many a famous man and woman of letters. The majority of these writers visited, at one period or another, the Court at Clevedon, where, in the words of Coleridge, "e'en the breezes of the simple air possess the pow'r and spirit of melody."

The majority, although by no means all, of these literary treasures which are preserved in the library in which Thackeray began writing *Esmond*, bear their reminiscent tribute to the personal magnetism of the literary Sir Charles, about whose "bump of benevolence" Tennyson waxed so eloquent! His circle of famous friends was probably considerably widened on account of the marriage to W. H. Brookfield—whom Tennyson fondly describes as "old Brooks who loved so well to mouth my rhymes"—of his youngest daughter, Jane Octavia, who became the enchantress of a brilliant literary circle whose published reminiscences make fascinating reading.

Fame, who rewarded so lavishly the talents of the friends of this hospitable West Country baronet, has dealt somewhat lethargically, it seems, with the talents of the host himself. In the library at Clevedon Court, some years ago, the present writer came upon a volume of Sir Charles Elton's poems which, he regrets to have to state, are now out of print! The poems of Sir Charles are principally of the didactic and the philosophical order. At his worst, I think, he makes tedious reading. He wrote, perhaps, for his own period alone. But I believe that if this volume were to be reprinted there would be found, within

the great obscure company that still derives a genuine poetical and philosophical enjoyment from the reading of Cowper, Goldsmith, Pope and Crabbe, admirers of the distinctive outpourings of the meticulous Charles Elton. The bigotry and morbid egotism of Cowper are rarely present in them. Some of their finest descriptions of natural scenery, leave upon the senses, when the reading is over, a lingering afterglow of enjoyment that is akin to the impression created by Coleridge in a piece of the character of " the lime tree bower, my prison." Nature and human nature elicit from him, for the use of his muse, the same gifts of uncommon observation and sympathetic insight as those which were very probably responsible for the creation of his remarkable accumulation of poetic friendships. Occasionally, as in the following verses, he reveals the possession of a genius for expressing human emotion sensuously and succinctly:

Look on the rose-tree's vermeil gem,
For such thy blooming hope will be;
Then mark it withering on the stem,
A symbol of thy bliss and thee.

The feeling eyes that melt and shine,
May darken in their noon of day;
And the kind arm, enlink'd in thine,
Be snatch'd, as in a dream, away.

But if Sir Charles Elton is to be remembered as a poet, as indeed I think he should be, it will be primarily as a poetic specialist in the subject of Paternity that he will be revered. The majority of his poems, including *Boyhood*, which gives title to his volume, are expressly devoted to the philosophical, didactic and romantic treatment of this theme. The author's parental delight and sagacity were, indeed, exemplary, if we may draw our conclusions from the tenour of his poems; and it is an exceedingly tragic fact that one who was gifted with a sense of fatherhood that was so joyous and so passionate as his should have been destined to found one of the most memorable of his poetic achievements upon the remembrance of a disaster which befel two of his sons.

Abraham Elton (aged 14) and Charles Elton (aged 13) who are portrayed, by the way, in Bird's famous picture, " The Burghers of Calais," were cut off by the tide and drowned at Weston-super-Mare, in September, 1819, while attempting to swim from Birnbeck Isle. The elder boy came to the rescue of the younger boy, and the bodies of the youthful pair were found, says the *Bristol Gazette* of the period under review, " locked in one another's arms " on the opposite Welsh Coast. In the vault below the richly-storied South Transept of

Clevedon's church of Tennysonian association the bodies of the two boys were laid; and their tender *In Memoriam* is chanted by their father in a sombrely-beautiful monody entitled *The Brothers*.

In *The Brothers*, Sir Charles Elton draws upon simple, human, commonplace incidents to create a tale of pathos that drew tears from the eyes of melancholy old Landor. Writing to Robert Southey in 1836 he says: "I have just been reading for the third time Sir Charles Elton's elegy on the loss of his two sons. Many parts strike me as much as anything I have read after elegiac. Tears were in my eyes the first, second, and third time, after reading:

> That night the little chamber where they lay
> Fast by our own, was vacant and was still.

Thus the poet describes his sons, "the elder shapely boy,"

> Tall for his years and slender as the stem
> Of spiring pine; and femininely soft
> With silken skin and smooth and tapering hands
> And lips of rose; the flexile, graceful hair
> Waved with light bend, as of a Roman youth:

the younger:

> Of lower stature; his young limbs were cast
> In somewhat stronger mould; his visage still
> Retained the rounded form of infancy,
> And the vermilion glowed upon his cheek.
> Type of robuster health; a deeper blue
> Was in his eyes; and trains of serious thought
> Manly and calm, would mark his steady glance;
> While mirthfulness oft revelled in his smiles
> As though the heart could not restrain the tide
> Of innocent delight, that gush'd at once
> In fullness of its joy." . . .

"Their art of safety was their snare." Their youthful bodies were laid

> Unspotted and unbroken, where the sea
> Beats Cambria's clift that in the sunlight gleams,
> Full opposite that seaside tower which tops
> The verdant hill, their grave and monument.

And their grief-stricken father muses upon the remembrance of their departed spirits:

> I see them on the hills, th' elastic air
> Of early Autumn glowing on their cheeks,
> And bracing their young limbs. I hear them yet.
> They shouted in their joy. Those hills no more
> Shall echo with their voices, nor the turf
> Spring to the pressure of their bounding feet.

Upon the noon, the Sabbath noon, that shone
To them the last, and harbinger'd the day
Whose sun should set unheeded by their eyes,
Perchance we wandered to a place of graves,
Along the green hillside. . . .
Retracing then my steps, I saw the boy—
I see him yet—with features rosy flushed,
Reaching at berries on the brier-hid wall.
Such, oft, in playful tribute, he would bring,
A pastoral offering to his father's hand.
And on the midway hill, the elder stooped,
Lingering at distance as he cull'd the plants
With which his bosom and his grasp were filled.
They met me at that village churchyard wall,[1]
The limit of their pleasant pilgrimage.
Then—and, alas, for ever, so, with feigned
Parental chiding of delay, I named
That spot their boundary ; the green range beyond
Forbidden ; and they smiled upon my threat.

The simple pathos of *The Brothers* is relieved by many a robust and many a delicate word-painting of the sylvan and coastal beauties of Clevedon ; and the natural splendours of Clifton Downs in Spring and in Winter are charmingly contrasted. Clevedon Court is pictured :

With terraces and verdant slopes where pines
Arch'd their plumed boughs and fruits espalier trained
Were mixed with myrtles and with arbute trees.

Sir Charles Elton was the author of several theological treatises and translations from the Classics, including, notably, *The Works of Hesiod*, *The Remains of Hesiod*, and *Specimens of the Classic Poets*, in a chronological series from Homer to Tryphiodorus. His work was highly praised by Southey and by his great friend, Charles Lamb, with whom he wrote, contemporaneously in the *London Magazine*, and who remarked, in an epistle, that to read Sir Charles Elton was " like eating brown bread, homely sweet and nutritious."

REX HINTON.

[1]Clevedon's *In Memoriam* Church.

The impatient young writer of verse, eager for print and recognition, should ponder over the saying of Keats : " I feel assured I should write for the mere yearning and fondness I have for the beautiful even if my night's labours should be burnt every morning and no eye ever shine upon them."

SOME NOTABLE NEW VOLUMES

Two particularly interesting volumes under discussion this month are *Sophocles' King Oedipus*, by W. B. Yeats (A version for the Modern Stage) Macmillan, 2s. 6d.; and *Cheiron*, by R. C. Trevelyan (Hogarth Press). It is difficult to judge of the former, for one has learnt to expect something utterly different to this from the lyric pen that wrote *The Countess Cathleen*. The modern carelessness of speech in the prose dialogue is disconcerting, and in spite of the testimony of an enthusiastic reception awarded to the play when it was performed at the Abbey Theatre in 1926, one experiences, on reading it, the same sensation of " thinness " in the diction that a devotee of Shakespeare productions feels when the repertory company puts on Sheridan or Goldsmith for a change. The choruses, however, contain the old magic . . . with their final :—

> Make way for Oedipus. All people said,
> " That is a fortunate man ; "
> And now what storms are beating on his head ?
> Call no man fortunate that is not dead.
> The dead are free from pain.

Cheiron, also, does not pretend to be anything but modernly colloquial in diction and loses dignity thereby, but the powerful figure of the legendary tradition imposes itself upon the theme, and, through it, upon our imagination.

The Wild Rose by Arthur Lyon Raile (Duckworth), another noticeable volume, will not be enjoyed by everybody—it will probably be " caviare to the general,"—but to those who care to penetrate into its close-packed ideas and to give its concise style a studious scrutiny, there is a feast of poetic thought in store. " Passion and the Poet " is perhaps one of the more lucid poems :—

> Let Passion's stream be locked
> in marble of unalterable verse,
> and let the goddess' self be mocked
> by strict embrace of stronger arms than hers . . .
> by closer clasp
> than fabled cordage of Calydnian asp.
>
> Struggling her soul to free
> she breathes it forth into the sacred head
> that after death her melodist shall be,
> oracular, immortal, piloted
> to unknown shore,
> as murdered Orpheus, singing evermore.

In his *Notes for Poems* (Hogarth), Wm. Plomer is very unfair to his readers. For an author who can write the provocative "Plomer's Christ" and such fine words as these in "The End of Thought is Madness":—

> . . . until at last I feared
> Lest speculative gloom should overtake me,
> Some slow disastrous palsy of the soul;
> That faith and hope and love might all forsake me,
> And gradual vapours of depression roll
> Across the sky in waves upon a wind of doubt,
> Extinguishing the constellations overhead,
> Till, one by one the last few stars ruled out,
> I should be left with a disease called dread.

to perpetrate and publish in the same book the quips that he terms epitaphs and the jargon contained in many of the apparently serious poems, is an injury both to himself and them.

In *Colour of Water*, by Marjorie Meeker (Brentano's, N.Y.), richness of thought is matched with richness of utterance. The poignancy of the later poems disproves the author's avowal . . . "the reasoned dream has failed, that grief became a source where beauty fed." Among the many beautiful snow pictures that we possess hers is likely to find a remembered place. I give the first two verses of 'Snowfall':—

> At noon the elfin flakes began to fall.
> The air was intricate with such a flight
> Of unsubstantial bloom as left on all
> The earth a lovely petaling of light.
>
> A wide, swift radiance dazzled earth and air;
> There was no rich disguise, no gold to mar
> The hushed and heaping whiteness anywhere
> Till all the city was a silver star.

Stones, by George Gerald Somerville (Four Seas) shows unusual variation of the single theme signified in the title. Apparently-dead things truly come to life in the author's plastic hands, though one cannot see eye to eye with the publisher in his eulogy of the verse, for the metre is not free from imperfections, and the refrain, that gives a keynote to many of the poems, is at best a clumsy one. In spite of this, however, there is much to admire, especially in "The Avalanche," where the early mutterings of the disaster (given below) are as sinister as the final crash is terrorizing.

Upon the mountain's head were many stones,
And folded, too, were many weary storms,
One on another piled, congealed in ice,
That worked together there uneasily
And kept a warm remembrance of the day;
And when the mountain seemed to drowse awhile
And wore a dream that was the morning star,
Their steps began to move, and stealthily
They wandered earthwards on a gelid stream,
And carried boulders too, with feet grown numb,
In their advances down to warmer lands,
Which liquified their steps to take a stride
And gather more recruits to feed their strength.

In *Twist o' Smoke*, by Mildred Bowers (Yale Series of Younger Poets, 2*s.* 6*d.*), there are a handful of vivid little poems that have crushed large experience into a few lines of fanciful or piquant verse. A mixture of both is found in "Security":—

Time is piled like furniture
  Against my door.
You need not try the lock,
Or pry, or pound
  Any more.

I shall not hide or tremble
  When I hear you call.
The years are stacked between us
  Stronger than a wall.

Some of the word painting in *Willow and Windflower*, by Andrew G. C. Gibson (Elkin Mathews) is exquisite, but its application to the meanings of life is not always successful. There are many good things to read in *Beads and Charms*, an anthology compiled by May Folwell Hoisington (Broder, N.Y.) although the choice of poems has not been entirely discriminating. There is poignancy in "Dirge of Devon" by Ruth Mason Rice; and in "Armistice Day" by Lefa Morse Eddy; delicacy of thought and design in the Sonnettes by Sherman Ripley; an appealing simplicity in "White Hyacinths" by M. A. Haley; a truly sinister tone in "Moon Blight" by Roberta Stiles; and something of pleasure in most of the other poems. One of the Sonnettes seems to be the most suitable for quotation. . . . "Contrast," by S. Ripley, which incidentally is another snow picture.

Smother and whispering gloom! a city snowing!
The ghostly sidewalks muffled deep in white,
Across the aura of electric light
A steady murk of silver feathers flowing.

Flashes to mind that sudden vivid pain
Scarred on my memory one August night
By crystal fingers of the summer rain.

The Hogarth Lectures on Literature Series are admirably commenced by their introductory volume, *A Lecture on Lectures* by Sir Arthur Quiller Couch (Hogarth Press, 2s. 6d.), in which the author sets forth the pros and cons of the lecture method of education and succeeds, as always, in convincing his readers of the soundness of his opinions by a scholarly persuasion rather than by a didactic rhetoric. No. 3 of the series, *Studies in Shakespeare* by Allardyce Nicoll, who considers four of the great Tragedies, helps to confirm one's sometimes halting belief that not too much but too little has already been written round the Master, even while one is occasionally driven to prefer one's own tentative conclusions upon certain points of character in the figures under discussion. In yet another of this series, *The Development of English Biography*, Harold Nicholson has in a small compass covered a large field of literature and sharpens one's intelligent enjoyment of the great biographies of the language by a careful scrutiny of the structure of the books and the motives that informed them.

* * *

It is an immense delight to come upon a writer like Jean Smith. In *Shepherd of Souls* her intermingling of classicism and religious mysticism gains everything in the way of beauty and loses nothing in the way of reverence. And yet I think it is upon her sure sense of the sea that some of her loveliest passages are built. This sea-sense is evident in *Whitehall Gardens . . . Floodtide.*

The hours creep drowsing through this quiet room,
The sparrows chirp, the trams' well ordered hum,
Whisper of papers and the writers dumb.

And up the river quick the sea comes swelling,
Full, with a following wind,
And the white gulls behind.
The great gulls circle, crying their strange cry. . . .
Cry out, you bitter voices ; break our security,
Wild souls from the wild waste !
And the great flood makes haste ;
Salt water brims and bustles ; you can hear
How the old craft astir
Heave on the full tide, tug their bearded painters,
Remembering what things they cannot tell
Of nomad voyages, and the wheeling stars
And deep-sea swell.

Then at slackwater they'd be still again,
Poor souls no dreaming stirs,
But, with the ebb tide, lowing all together
They hear them take the stream and face the weather,
Sea-going ships, escaping prisoners. . . .

* * *

Those fortunate enough to have been amongst the audience at Rogate last year are the best judges of the *Farcical Romantic Pastoral*, as Mr. J. C. Squire has aptly termed his *Robin Hood* (Heinemann, 5s.). The romantic atmosphere and melodramatic situations are very cleverly spiced with a mischievous modern flavour that quite disarms any austere criticism.

* * *

There is so much of the original charm of the old French story recaptured in *Aucassin and Nicolette* by Anthony Crossley (Christophers) by the author, and the various forms of verse employed are so satisfying in diction and imagery, that one has only to regret the fragmentary nature of the poem. Even a reader who is well acquainted with the outline of the tale is at a loss to bridge over some of the gaps left to his memory and imagination. A reluctance on the part of the author to take his readers into his full confidence is also noticeable in the other noteworthy poem in this volume, called *Time*. A foreword of explanation is never an acceptable alternative to the full revelation of its theme in the poem itself. The following stanza is the counterpart of one of the passages, that describing Nicolette's escape from prison, quoted in Walter Pater's "incomparable study." She ran . . .

Thro' plushy grass; and the white flowers were dark
Against her feet! Clover and stickle-wort
Scarce bowed beneath her tread, as thro' the park
She ran; and lifted up her silken skirt
Above the dew-spray. Soon, without a hurt,
She gained the street, and where the shadow slept
She swiftly trod; and where the perilous spurt
Of window lights made grey the walls she crept!
Yet hist! what ill-starred wight his lonely vigil kept?

* * *

There is a fine vigour as well as beauty of language and thought in *Sky-Rider* (Mosher) by Dr. Wade Oliver, who is known to many as a contributor to POETRY REVIEW and POETRY OF TO-DAY. He is one of those who can successfully run scientific knowledge and poetry in double harness. Many of his poems are memorable, none more so than his courageous *Recompense* . . .

Be with me, laughter, when the last, thin shout
Dies in my veins, and like a wavering spark

The last and glittering April gutters out
Before the windy tyrany of the dark;
Winnow my flesh with your clean, tempering breath,
Rattle my bones with your immortal mirth,
So may I shake a gusty stave at death,
And greet with praise the sovereignty of earth,

For in the long, cool silence of the tomb
No windy arras of the dawn is spread,
No gusty April showers sun and bloom
Upon the sterile dust that is the dead;
Be with me, laughter, on the last, lone mile
To make my baffled pilgrimage worth while.

* * *

Mr. D. H. Verder's *Book of Lyrics* (Nelson) contains simple, straightforward little poems written in obvious sincerity and with an unfeigned love of nature, as may be judged from *A New Home* . . .

I will go find a place in some new lands
Where hills slip gently down into the sea;
Along the shore there will be golden sands
And further back pine groves, much shrubbery.
I would not choose the city for a home;
It has too much of pain and misery.
I need a place where night and morning come
Gently and almost imperceptibly.
There will be flowers on the upland hills
For one to gather when the hours seem long:
Jonquils and roses wild and daffodils,
Red berries, princess pine, things that belong
To woody places; and a little pond
Whence I can see my lodge and look beyond.

* * *

Many of the poems in *Rhymes of the Road* by David Emrys (Cecil Palmer) are simple and musical; others contain a sterner motif than love and sentiment, though in these there is a tendency to indulge in the sweeping generalizations so often harmful to any "cause." Mr. Emrys would serve his better by more artistry and less bitterness. He shows his best qualities in *The Judges* and *The Awakening*.

* * *

We wish to recommend to all readers of THE POETRY REVIEW the *Poems and Miscellanies of Edgar Allen Poe* in the Oxford Edition of Standard Authors, published by the Oxford University Press at the low price of 3s. 6d. net. The book contains Poe's most charming and harmonious poetry and three essays on poetry which are of great import to all who are interested in the theory and practice of poetry. This valuable edition is edited by the assiduous Mr. R. Brimley Johnson, who contributes an introduction.

With our experience of verse-speakers we wish that they had all had the advantage that fell to the lot of Sir George Young in his youth. In the preface to *An English Prosody on Inductive Lines* (Cambridge University Press, 15s.) he tells us: "I was as a child taught by my mother to be a lover and learner of poetry, especially of Cowper, Pope, Shakespeare, and Milton, and in the MS. of her brother Praed." Since it would be along task to assimilate the wealth of teaching included in this book, we can only hope that verse speakers, as well as writers, will absorb some of the outstanding points of this study of English Prosody. Sir George Young, who was a fellow of Trinity College, and a Vice-Chairman of the Berkshire Education Committee, has produced an important addition to the literature of English poetry.

* * *

Mr. Rostrevor Hamilton, who assisted in the return of the epigram, has put out his own volume of *Epigrams* (Heineman, 3s. 6d.). Mr. Hamilton translates from the Greek Anthology neatly, and his criticisms of men and things of to-day are pungent and witty, for instance:

If Christ Himself did not disdain
To stoop so low and take our shape,
How should a Christian be so vain,
Bending an inch to own the ape?

* * *

Mr. Stanley Snaith is one of those poets for whom the English language is so lacking that he is forced to coin words for his own needs, and in *A Flying Scroll* (Hogarth, 2s. 6d.) we find the following: foam-flower, sundrench, sapgold, ineluctible, fountlessly, droopling, and such lines as "The hour comes when doming snow massily threats." Nevertheless, there is real merit in many verses, as in this from *October*:

The trees, grave with the mellow weight,
Lingeringly loosening trees on tress,
Burden the air with the austere, sweet,
Sorrow of all domed loveliness.

* * *

A new edition of Miss Gertrude Bell's translation of the poems of Hafiz (*Poems from the Divan of Hafiz*, Heinemann, 5s.) contains an excellent preface by Sir E. Dennison Ross, who regards it as "nothing short of a *tour de force* on the part of Miss Bell" to piece together her scattered material and to produce such a "masterly introduction." He also raises another point of interest, which has been discussed at length in THE POETRY REVIEW, when he notes that the *Ghazal* is similar in some ways to our sonnet, except that in the eastern form each couplet contains a new idea. Of the verse of Miss Bell there is no necessity to speak at any length. Edward Brown, the great authority on Persian, said of her translations: "are true poetry of a very high order and, with perhaps the sinlge exception of Fitz-Gerald's paraphrase of the quatrains of Omar Khayyam, are probably the finest and most truly poetical renderings of any Persian poet ever produced in

the English language." Miss Bell, with her wide experience of life and customs in the East, was indeed admirably fitted for translating a poet who was recognized by his fellow-countrymen as the " Tongue of the Hidden and the Interpreter of Secrets."

* * *

The Bodley Head has included in its admirable " Quill " series a selection of the letters of Robert Burns, made by the erudite and indefatigable editor of this and many similar literary series, Mr. R. Brimley Johnson, who contributes a very readable introduction which amounts to an appreciation of the genius and humanity of the self-conscious poet, whose heart is revealed in his artless letters as well as in his immortal verse. His discriminating selection from the voluminous correspondence of Burns is another illustration of the remarkable editorial qualities of Mr. Johnson. This is essentially a book for the poetry reader's library, and it has the advantage of being well indexed, but we would have hoped that the price could have been made less than six shillings so that there might have been a larger general sale.

* * *

The most distinctive new book of poetry this season is the collected edition published by Messrs. Macmillan of the poems of John Freeman (6s.). The main part of this collection, on which we must reserve judgment till a later date, consists of poems already included in *Poems New and Old*, *Music*, and *The Grove*, and other verse, hitherto unpublished in book form, which combine to make the book representative of the author's work during the last twenty years.

Sleeping beauties and giant-killers are all very well in their way, but the true way of appealing to children is to tell a story of things they have known, and of places where they have been. Miss Florence Hoatson has done this with a considerable measure of success in *Lavender's Blue* (Harrap). Her verse is sometimes forced and sometimes lively. Compare, for instance :

Our Persian puss is smart,
He could never be a dunce.

with

Oh, I am the jar, the family jar,
And the family jars on me.

But the verses are almost all in a very happy vein, and the interest of the book is by no means confined to children.

* * *

In the foreword to his new book, *Triforium* (Cobden Sanderson, 5s.), Mr. Sherrard Vines states that *The Pyramid* was published in 1926-7 without a preface in the hope that it would be sufficiently obvious to explain itself. Now, presumably, realizing that it is too much to hope that this volume will do the same, he adds a most egotistical preface. Safely exiled in another hemisphere, Mr. Vines apparently finds it a pleasure to criticize his critics. We think that verse should not need a preface, and we are convinced that the time has not yet come when it is the part of a poet ot add an explanatory foreword to a book of verse.

THE PREMIUM EDITOR'S REPORT

A distinguished professor of English who contributes critical articles on English poetry to THE POETRY REVIEW has read this month's premium poems as a holiday task and found them an illuminating index to contemporary English verse. We adopt his recommendations with relief and respect. The most sustained, graphic, original piece of work is *The Roundhead* by A. W. Uloth (King's Lynn)—a noble, dignified treatment of an essentially English character. Nobility, too, and metrical skill distinguish Vera Arlett's *Song in the Poets' Age*, and from out of three lyrics by Irene Oldershaw (Dulwich) *Dreaming* is found to be a refined miniature with a finish and homogenity that the other pieces lack. Of another type of poem, *The Woman of Wist* by Dorothy Rose (Pikesville, Maryland) is an excellent example, achieving an atmosphere that is not shattered, as so frequently happens, by a crude or incongruous word or phrase. With these typical and distinctive poems must be placed *Shelter in Storm* by A. D. L. Wilson who garners with precision and delicacy the harvest of a quiet eye, and G. W. Eustace's *Pause*, reminiscent of Swinburne, with an intoxication of words, but cleverly wrought. Another Irene Oldershaw, this time hailing from Leicester, deserves special commendation for *Seven Dead Souls*—eerie but bewildering, and in this class for grace, vigour and neatness of expression are placed contributions by Mrs. Eve (Weybridge), Blanche Jones, Sylvia Dobson (who falls occasionally into prosy and colloquial phrases), Dr. W. C. Borrie (Glasgow), and M. A. Watson (Oxton). On the commended list are placed Dulcie Greville (who has come under the influence of Donne), Annie T. Riddell (Victoria B.C.,), Dr. Skeat, Eric Muncaster (Alberta)—who over-stresses the emotion of *Exile*—L. F. Collingham (Gt. Missenden) and Frances Moyes Daft (San José)—whose names with several others the printers misprinted last issue—Hilda Holmes, Mrs. D. M. Burton (Edgbaston), M. Newton (Purley), and Sinclair Maclagan (Kirriemuir).

Epigrams sent in by T. E. Casson, Victoria Slade, N. K. Cruickshank and others are responsible for the suggestion that makes a feature of a page of neatly-turned, pointed quatrains if sufficient acceptable contributions reach us.

We have again to complain of the omission of name and address from several MSS. We have insisted for years that each MS. must bear the name and address of the author, yet we are constantly in receipt of MSS. that bear no signature and still more from which the address is omitted. With some little trouble we can find the address of a contributor, if necessary, but we cannot identify MSS. without a name, and henceforth will destroy such offending contributions. In the present batch of poems we find the following without any clue to their authorship :—*After Henley*, *The Wind and the Rain*, *Roses and Immortality*, *My Baby*, *Cormorant and Laver*. We have to complain, too,

of a recrudescence of the unstamped or insufficiently stamped packet nuisance. Instructions have been given that all such missives must be refused.

* * *

The Lewis premium offer elicited many thoughtful poems that treated sleep from many aspects—philosophical, realistic, mystical, questioning, with a few that were trite, disjointed and ludicrous. The adjudicators recognize beauty and ingenuity in the poems by A. G. Eddison (S.W.11), Emma King (Indianapolis), Florence Bradford (Chelsea), Edith Walker (Bournemouth), N. J. French (Bradford, Penn.), Vera Arlett, E. F. Alden (Haddenham), M. Miller Beard (Amarillo), Julia Green (San Bernardino), Grace Harris (Catford), F. Luxmoore, Joyce Harrison, M. E. Woodward (Portland, Or.), Dorothy Ewens, Mabel Posegate (Cincinnati), Ada Norman (Weymouth), D. M. Burton (Edgbaston), Blanche Lee (Oneida), S. R. Myers (Chicago), Aline Howard (London, S.W.), H. L. Dixon (Warminster), G. E. Merrick (Warminster), Eva Dobell (Cheltenham), Mrs. Graham Botha (Capetown), E. A. Cullabine (Worksop), Sister Audrey (Ottery St. Mary), P. O. Donnell (Clevedon), E. L. Kinlock (Glasgow), Blanche Jones (Margate), D. Rymer (Cheltenham), Eliz. Binnington (Louth), G. W. Lacey (Oswestry), Eric Chappelow (Blackheath), John Willwyn (Godbowen), M. Soper, (Blackheath), Sydney Snell, Rosa A. Langtry, F. Kemp (Catford), Sylvia Dobson, May Rowland (Eastbourne), M. R. Musgrave, Bertha Annakin (Wetherby), Doris Wilson, M. B. Moynahan (Indianopolis), and sonnets by Dr. W. Borrie, Mrs. Munzer, Mrs. Hall Hains, M. E. Rose (Derby), E. Cotter Johnston (Cincinnati), A. K. G. (Washington), G. W. Eustace, are also specially commended. The influence of Shelley, Keats and Poe was very apparent in form and treatment, and several contributors exalted sleep above the waking life.

In making the awards, the adjudicators agree in placing Miss Margaret Napier (Shaftesbury) at the head of the list for her refined delicate, restrained summary of sleep; and they divide two guineas between two other characteristic groups—the pictorial, imaginative descriptions of Miss Wilson, Miss Arlett and Miss Dobell, and the effective, typical sonnet-synopses by Mrs. Posegate and Miss Merrick, with Miss Harrison's rhythmically erected *House of Sleep* in reserve.

* * *

The disappointment we expressed in the last issue more particularly concerned the absence of any serious recognition of the important duties devolving on this section of THE POETRY REVIEW rather than the announcement of a new volume of contemporary poems, written by a selected number of Poetry Reviewers. We hope readers will look back to the remarks on the development of a Board of Examiners in Verse Writing, a function which, as we pointed out, is peculiarly within the scope of the Poetry Society. We

are glad to have at least one endorsement of its importance, and we hope for a greater number, with some practical suggestions.

We welcome expressions of opinions and criticism from members of our world-wide fellowship. It therefore gratifies us to be asked by Mrs. Osborne, of Silcoates, to say how much she appreciates " Julia Boynton Green's delightful and able article on ' The Poetic Temperament.' It is evident that the people possessed of a creative sense of vision are not, as a rule, successful in the daily walk of life, particularly if their position in life renders it necessary for them to perform practical work for daily bread. People are not as a rule expected to excel in many various ways. And yet competence in practical affairs seems always to be expected. I suppose it is that the benefits we get from the poets are, like all the greatest and most real things, too intangible to be appreciated by the many. Whereas their shortcomings are apparent to the merest child. Therefore I think Miss Green's defence both brave and able. She makes a particularly delightful point of the poet being the ' great economist ' of the world."

Mr. John Purdie, who has been associated with us for some time, voices an old and insistent demand.

" I should like to feel that I am doing something for the fellowship—which seems to me to be lacking in chances for strengthening the bond which true fellowship demands. I should like to get into touch with my comrades in ' the goodliest fellowship of poetic knights '—to change a well-known line ; I should like, for example to tilt a lance with some of them on the modern tendency of breaking all the accepted canons of rhyme—many examples of which appear in the July–August No. 7, THE POETRY REVIEW. I should like in a word to know that I am in this fellowship by coming in contact with the members of it—either by letter or discussion in the REVIEW."

We may point out to members of the Fellowship that this section of THE POETRY REVIEW is their particular department, and that they are at liberty to express their opinions therein. This is a better way to meet other members than by the small local meetings which have been tried, limited to the few who can attend at any one time and place. THE POETRY REVIEW is the meeting place of a large and noble company scattered over the English-speaking world, our Fellowship not being a feeble London or Manchester or New York group of versifiers.

Mr. Gilbert, of Fergus, Ontario, introduces himself to the Fellowship as the " new boy "—one of several to be admitted recently. He finds the effort to secure expression an absorbing relaxation in a busy life, " but while working fourteen hours a day may keep a poet's mind and body healthy, it also makes him tired."

A propos the observations on borrowing by Mr. Michael Roberts, and the difficulties that beset adjudicators who have so much to take into account in summing up the value of a poem, Sister Audrey suggests " that if Eliz. R. Binnington, who wrote ' Peter—August 1915 '

—is really only 14 now, she should be warned against spoiling her work by lifting ideas. She could not at the age of seven months and four days remember the incidents described in her poem. We can all lift ideas from those older than ourselves or from short stories. 'The black man's servant' for instance would make a very dramatic poem—the joy—the silence—the darkness—and the long drawn hiss. That similar ideas occur to many of us is only human. Henry Meade Bland in his ' Life ' is getting at the same thing as myself in ' Lines for an autograph album '—mine were written many years ago—but you couldn't call it a paraphrase. Florida Watts Smyth in ' Lost skill ' is remembering Kipling. The article on ' borrowing ' is very interesting. Our modern poets have lost ' the long majestic march and energy divine.' Will the critics of 200 years hence look back and laugh as we laugh with Pope at Queen Caroline and her grottos and her pet poets and poor Stephen Duck ? "

* * *

Mr. W. K. Lewis provides another three guineas for poems on " Myself." As artists, particularly in the days of old, were adepts at painting their own portraits, why should not poets do the same ? Instead of seeing ourselves as others see us, why should we not try to reveal ourselves to others and help them to see us with our own eyes ? No set of people are more misunderstood and misrepresented than poets. None are more sensitive or difficult to understand. If we don't know ourselves, who knows us better than we do ? MSS. should reach the Editor not later than November 25th.

The usual premium of £2 for the best poem or poem submitted to the Premium Editor during the month (without limitation of subject) is continued. Any MSS. should be addressed to " The Premium Editor," the Poets' Fellowship, THE POETRY REVIEW Office, before Oct. 1st, accompanied by stamped addressed envelope, or international coupon, and, if criticism is desired, 2s. 6d. (If a more detailed postal criticism is desired, 5s. should be sent.)

For particulars of the two special premium offers of £20 each see page 297.

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We regret to have to record the death on August 17th of the Very Rev. William Page Roberts, D.D., ex-Dean of Salisbury, who became a vice-president of The Poetry Society in June, 1911, and remained an appreciative member until his death at Shanklin at the age of 93. Dr. Page Roberts was an omnivorous reader whose deep, wide culture gave further distinction to his earnest, intellectual sermons and addresses. He loved to use his deep rich voice in reading poetry aloud and was throughout one of the finest representatives and exponents of the ideas of The Poetry Society.